A Walk in the Garden

Biblical, Iconographical and Literary Images of Eden

edited by
Paul Morris
and
Deborah Sawyer

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PREFACE

This volume about beginnings had its origins in a colloquium at Lancaster ('The Garden of Eden: Exegesis, Iconography and Literature', 1986). The intention was to bring together scholars with expertise in biblical studies, the traditions of Jewish and Christian exegesis, the histories of art and literature, and various contemporary approaches to the study of texts, to 'labour' in the Garden of the text of Genesis.

Starting with expositions of the biblical text, the aim was to draw on the long and complex histories of Jewish *and* Christian exegesis of the biblical text (pre-critical exegesis), both in terms of the dynamic processes and strategies of interpretation and the light that they might shed on the 'text itself'. The net was cast wider than the usual authoritative rabbinic and theological/ecclesiastical 'commentaries', to include literary and iconographical sources, and modern and contemporary authors and issues. The resonances, allusions, motifs, structures, context and language of the Genesis text were highlighted in the specific contexts of its historical exegesis and these interpretations, in turn, reveal the interpretative potentialities and possibilities of the biblical narrative.

In terms of approaches to the study of the biblical text, this volume, taken as a whole, offers the first steps towards the development of a new programme. With the background of the biblical scholarship of the last century and a half (critical exegesis), in its historical context, as a basis and point of departure for our studies, the objective is to utilize both pre-critical and critical interpretative schemas in order to develop a framework for a 'post-critical' exegesis. Such a framework would be responsive to the critical tradition *and* the historical traditions of exegesis.

We wish to thank those that gave papers that have not been included for various reasons in this volume, especially: Robert Murray (Heythrop College, London) for his fascinating paper, 'Adam and the

Animals'; Elizabeth Briere for her study of 'the Fall' in the liturgies of the Orthodox Church; Richard Comstock (University of California, Santa Barbara) for his analysis of Milton's understanding of the Garden story; and Meg Twycross (Lancaster University) for a magnificent and most illuminating account of the mediaeval dramatic stagings of 'the Fall'. Two chapters additional to those first delivered as conference papers have been included ('Resurrecting Eve?' and 'In Search of her Father').

We are grateful to the following for permission to reproduce copyright illustrations. The British Library, London: pages 169, 185, 187 and 192; Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Munich: pages 175, 194 and 195; Society of Antiquaries of London: page 179; Centrale Bibliotheek, Rijksuniversiteit te Gent: page 189; Universitatsbibliothek Salzburg: page 191; Bibliothek des Germanischen National Museums, Nurnberg: page 197; Bodleian Library, Oxford: page 298; Historisches Museum, Frankfurt am Main: page 208.

We wish to add our thanks to Dr Philip Davies of Sheffield Academic Press for his support and advice with regard to this project.

Finally, we wish to thank the five 'generations' of Lancaster students (Religious Studies 208, The Garden of Eden) for their contributions and 'eye-opening' insights into the nature of an ever obscure text.

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ABBREVIATIONS

AB	Anchor Bible
AJSL	*American Journal of Semitic Languages and Literatures*
ARN	*Abot deRabbi Nathan*
ArOr	*Archiv orientální*
Bib	*Biblica*
BJRL	*Bulletin of the John Rylands University Library of Manchester*
CBQ	*Catholic Biblical Quarterly*
HR	*History of Religions*
HTR	*Harvard Theological Review*
ICC	International Critical Commentary
JAAR	*Journal of the American Academy of Religion*
JBL	*Journal of Biblical Literature*
JJS	*Journal of Jewish Studies*
JQR	*Jewish Quarterly Review*
JR	*Journal of Religion*
JSJ	*Journal for the Study of Judaism in the Persian, Hellenistic and Roman Period*
JSOT	*Journal for the Study of the Old Testament*
JSS	*Journal of Semitic Studies*
JTS	*Journal of Theological Studies*
LCL	Loeb Classical Library
PRE	*Pirke deRabbi Eliezer*
RHPR	*Revue d'histoire et de philosophie religieuses*
TS	*Theological Studies*
TZ	*Theologische Zeitschrift*
VT	*Vetus Testamentum*
VTSup	*Vetus Testamentum*, Supplements
WTJ	*Westminster Theological Journal*
ZAW	*Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft*

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A WALK IN THE GARDEN: IMAGES OF EDEN

Paul Morris

For the last two millennia the text of the Garden of Eden (Gen. 1.26–3.24) and the traditions of its interpretation have provided the rarely disputed basis from which our explanations of the nature and status of humankind have been derived. Our primary relationships—between man and woman, humanity and deity, and humanity and nature—have been defined by our understandings of this biblical text. Our conceptions of perfection and our experiences of imperfection have been delineated, understood and explicated in terms of the Genesis story. The text reports a shattering and 'apocalyptic' moment—a moment that also creates the ultimate possibility of an equal and opposite 'restoration' moment—which has shaped the eschatologies and soteriologies of our Christianities and Judaisms. The Garden narrative has been central in informing both the meaning and content of our sexual, moral, artistic and literary traditions. The Eden story can be seen as *the* text of Western men and women, and given this centrality it has had a unique significance in the history of our ever-expanding culture—this text, much favoured by Christian missionaries, created 'nakedness' and clothed the known world.

The text still haunts us. This puzzling, question-raising and meaning-overloaded text with its mysterious trees and talking snake is still very much with us. The text of Genesis continues to figure prominently in current debates. For example, a recent article presents Genesis (3.16) as the basis of clerical opposition to the ordination of women in the Church of England.[1] And in connection with the important questions of animal rights and ecology, the biblical text is repeatedly cited and challenged.[2] Most significantly, it is brought to bear or rejected in the debates over the whole range of issues concerning the status and role of women and the relationship between the sexes. The centrality of the Genesis text is not only evidenced in the work of feminist biblical scholars, such as Phyllis Trible[3] and Mieke Bal,[4] but across the whole corpus of contemporary women's writing. From Alice Walker to Hélène Cixous, the Eden narrative has been retold in an attempt to re-appropriate the story from its later patriarchal interpretations. Cixous writes: 'it was there I discovered that masculine falsification comes in, and everything is in the commentary'.[5] Angela Carter (*The Passion of the New Eve*, 1977) and Monique Wittig (*The Guérillères*, 1969) re-narrate the biblical origin of woman as the foundation for their 'herstories' of humankind.[6] These issues still pervade our cultural life and thus are of concern to us all—non-believer and believer alike.[7]

Our European literary and artistic heritage displays an obsessional interest in the Garden of Eden and returns again and again to the Genesis narrative and its themes. The Eden story has provided the impetus for the creative imagination of the West in its quest for paradise and its recovery, together with the attendant portrayal of the human predicament.[8] The text and the history of its interpretation provide us with the necessary framework for the understanding of these artistic and literary creations. This tradition neither reaches its climax nor ends with Milton's *Paradise Lost* or Durer's 'Adam and Eve', but appears to be just as central to modern literature and art. Blake's 'gnosticism' is pre-figured by Gnostic exegesis and the same 'fall upwards' is transmuted into an exegetical line stretching from Kant's challenge to man ('Sapere Aude'), via Schiller's contention that the effects of the expulsion from Eden were beneficial—the eating of the apple marking the beginnings of morality—to Erich Fromm's psychoanalytical rendering.[9] We can trace different transformations from Dante to Milton, from Shelley's poetic reconstruction of paradise from the wreckages of Edens past to Wordsworth's restored Eden in his soul. It is all but impossible to avoid consideration of the Eden narrative in our paradisiacal quests.[10] From Chagall to Arthur Boyd, Kafka to Patrick White, Kant via Hegel to Shestov,[11] the human condition has been portrayed in terms of our understandings of the biblical Eden. The interpretations of this open text change in its seemingly endless re-interpretations, as the tensions and hidden facets of the biblical text itself are rediscovered anew. And if the genre of utopian literature that developed from the above is but one step removed from the exegesis of Genesis, then, one might argue, political reform movements from the end of the Middle Ages until the present are but a further short walk in the garden.

To take but one significant illustration, the Genesis narrative was an essential source for Franz Kafka. We cannot comprehend *The Trial* or *The Castle* unless we realize that his 'castle' was Eden. We are in exile—man can know (in fact, Kafka insists that we can never forget the Garden) but not live life as it can be. Kafka offers one of the most profound modern accounts of the human predicament and this account can be understood as an interpretation of Genesis ch. 3. He characterizes our situation as one in which we have eaten from the Tree of Knowledge but not from the Tree of Life. He writes, 'we are separated from God on both sides: the Tree of Knowledge separates us from Him, the Tree of Life separates Him from us'.[12] According to Kafka, man's loss of the Garden—the loss of pure language, love and time—was due solely to man's sin, the sin of impatience. Kafka, like so many artists and authors, was drawn to the Genesis narrative as the storehouse of our most fundamental cultural images. His writings evidence a close reading of the biblical text as the principal inspiration for the creativity of his interpretations.[13] We need not only to include literature and art in our exegetical studies but to develop ways of interpreting these creations *as* biblical exegesis.

The background to the continued centrality of biblical themes in modern literary and iconographical creativity is, of course, the long history of centuries of the acceptance of this text—the single most significant source of Western culture.[14] Christians and Jews held the complete Bible—albeit in their different ways—to be revelation, that is, the word of God. This position has become progressively undermined for many by the so-called 'critical' scholarship of the Bible. Critical scholarship had its beginning with Spinoza in the seventeenth century and became the dominant mode of the study of the Bible in Germany in the nineteenth century, a position which it retains in biblical studies, despite a rising tide of criticism, until the present. In their quest for truth, scholars have sought to distinguish 'fact' from 'fantasy' in the biblical traditions. Inspired by the Romantic longing for origins and using the latest 'scientific' methods they have attempted to reconstruct the history of the genesis of the biblical text. Using philological and grammatical methods, the findings of folklore studies, literary analysis, the anthropological and archaeological materials on the ancient Near East, and proto-sociological approaches, the once unified biblical text was presented as an amalgam of source-documents, held together by editors' notes, redactors' changes and scribes' glosses.

This 'scientific' study of the Bible, the so-called higher criticism (as opposed to mere 'old fashioned theology' and the 'lower' task of establishing the oldest texts) was part of the rise of the new historical science in Germany, a science which reflected the prevailing Idealist philosophy. Basing themselves on earlier work in identifying the different underlying biblical 'documents', the aim of such investigations was twofold. First, the identification of the specific historical context of each biblical section in terms of the particular stage of 'spiritual' development evidenced in these source documents. And secondly, the sewing together of these documents to create a grand meta-narrative of the development of the Israelite spirit from 'primitives' to a stage where they could be located in the yet grander narrative of the development of the Christian West.

Wellhausen and those that followed him (Graf–Wellhausen documentary hypothesis) set a particular scholarly agenda—to establish a feasible editorial history that would link the 'documents' to the present form of the text as a continuous document. The Idealist underpinnings entailed that every element had to have a specially locatable origin in earlier Near Eastern documents (the prior historical stage of the 'spirit') and that the Bible must be made to fit in every significant detail. The study of Genesis had already led to the distinction being made between the first chapter, and chs. 2 and 3 (1.1–2.4 versus 2.4–3.24) and the task at hand was to locate each element in the archaeological discoveries of the ancient Near East and to work out a series of editorial processes that explained the order and form of the biblical text. The identification of these two Genesis strands by Jean Astruc (based on the use of different divine names) was in many ways the formal beginnings of higher criticism, and the Genesis text has been in the very forefront of all subsequent biblical research. Each generation has 'tested' its theories and textual strategies on Genesis.

By the turn of the century, although the Graf–Wellhausen documentary hypothesis had become established and scholars continued to 'refine' their documentary theses (often merely by positing increasing numbers of sub-documents), the stress had moved to the identifications of the different 'genres' of biblical literature and their original 'life-situations' (Gunkel's commentary, 1901). Gunkel, influenced by the then current study of folk tales, considered that many of the Genesis narratives were a collection of 'sagen', whose original form could be recovered in the oral tales that revealed the simplicity of the mentality of these 'primitives'.[15] This approach developed into what came to be known as the 'traditio-historical' approach, that is, the discernment of 'cycles of tradition', originally oral forms which may or may not be recoverable, associated with focal points in Israelite life.

The Garden narrative presents particular problems: there appear to be repetitions and narrative breaks; the double name of God is unique in Genesis and used only one other time in the Pentateuch; there are no later direct biblical references to the Eden story; it offers a sustained narrative, and yet there is no adequate earlier Near Eastern parallel. In spite of the fact that this complex unity is not easily reducible to two or three earlier, redacted elements, scholars continue to treat the text in a fragmented fashion—a fragmentation that has led to the development of scholarly traditions concerned with each element within the Garden narrative. There are discrete, and often unrelated bodies of literature on the snake, the trees (separately and together), Eve, Adam, and gardens.[16] At best (e.g. von Rad), we are asked to consider a single narrative rather poorly constructed from a creation story and garden story.[17]

In spite of what von Rad called 'critical science in theology' being carried out by mostly committed believers, it marked itself off from earlier exegesis (pre-critical exegesis), except to note proto-traditions supporting current critical achievements. This cutting off of modern studies from two millennia of biblical scholarship had a number of bizarre effects, such as the failure to recognize similar problematics in earlier materials, and the use of Babylonian, Akkadian or Sumerian to discern the supposed meanings of biblical words at the expense of examining Hebrew usages which were chronologically and linguistically much closer.

There are two developments in more recent scholarship that have attempted to overcome some of the limitations of older approaches. First, there is canon criticism (Childs), which seeks to underpin particular exegeses with a view of the complete text as 'sacred scripture for Israel' and thus adopt a consciously theological perspective. In practice, canon criticism[18] entails an acceptance of much of the earlier scholarship and offers a new model of the editorial processes involved in the shaping of the canon from the amalgamation of existing materials. It does, however, significantly attempt to place the context of particular sections *within* the context of the Bible as a whole rather than within the history of the Near East and the spiritual development of the West. And although the concern is now with the part that the originally discrete elements play within the whole, and there is recognition that this part might be quite different from that played in its original context, the stress is still on the various underlying strands that make up the pre-history of the biblical text.

Secondly, there has been the development of literary modes of analysis.[19] While these are a far cry from Driver's 'we must distinguish between the narrative itself, the scenery and incidents, as such, and the spiritual teaching which they are intended to convey'[20] in that the concern is with the text itself, it is unfortunate that there appears to be little interest in anything else! There has been a wholesale rejection of the past 'findings' of more than a century and a half of biblical scholarship and once again a new set of ideological underpinnings has been applied to biblical materials. While it is vital not to follow the critical scholars (Driver *et al.*) in their arbitrary separation of form and content and to recognize that these are inextricably bound together, it is just as vital not merely to swap one set of external principles for another.

Biblical studies has followed (rather than initiated) the prevailing intellectual fashions since its inception in its modern guise—each new style promising a new foundation and defining itself against the preceding trend. The latest contender is 'postmodernist' biblical studies[21] both in its feminist[22] and non-feminist forms. Many of the insights of this revolution are most plausible. For example, the Derridean notion of the priority of writing over speech and the contention that writing has its own rules (logic) is a complete reversal of the maxim of the reverse priority of the oral that characterized the work of Gunkel, the Russian formalists and the early scholars of myth. This insight, which is analogous in some ways to some rabbinic notions, entails that we treat the text in a particular way but it is lamentable if we do not recognize that there are helpful and parallel analyses of writing implicit in the work of earlier scholars. Likewise, the notion that criticism should be 'reader-orientated' is indispensable but the modern reader comes to a text with a specific history and this sort of analysis must necessarily refer back to earlier exegeses. Further, it is a strange thought that earlier criticism was not 'reader-oriented'.[23] As we discover that the creation of historical epochs (critical/modern versus postmodern) are useful ways of registering vested interest and these distinctions begin to collapse, we need to overcome this oppositional approach to the history of biblical studies and attempt to integrate modernist and postmodernist positions (something which often, in fact, takes place).

The approach suggested in this volume is the attempt to develop a new model of criticism, which we have termed 'post-critical exegesis'. The intention is to link current textual strategies with both the critical scholarship of the last one hundred and fifty years *and* the pre-critical studies of the biblical text that preceded, and to undertake this within the context of a broad notion of exegesis to include art and literature. Critical scholarship sheds great light on the problems of specific biblical texts. The repetitions, apparent (or real) contradictions, the different divine appellations and the breaks in the continuous flow of the narrative so diligently discovered by critical scholars all highlight textual features of great significance. It is these very features which give the shape and structure to the narratives. They alert us to subtle changes in the text. We need, thus, to separate the textual analyses of the 'critical' generations from their more comprehensive notions of historical development.

Almost all of these features were, in fact, noted by pre-critical exegetes but, of course, they were accounted for in very different ways. It is interesting to note that one of the recent developments in the studies of Genesis comes very close to the rabbinic understanding of that text.[24]

The resonances, motifs and allusions within the Genesis text are the same resonances, motifs and allusions that inspired Philo, Wellhausen and Trible and are not exhausted by any of them. We need to understand the context of each of these interpretations, that is, to recognize the relationship between the interpretative contexts (such as the rabbinic debates on social issues; the issues faced by the Reformation theologian; or the contemporary concern of ecologists) and the text as constructed by a community of interpreters, that in turn form part of *the* historical communities of interpreters. We need to approach the text through the history of its interpretation both pre-critical and critical in the development of a post-critical perspective.

In Chapter 2, Jonathan Magonet offers an analysis of the two central themes of 'separations' and 'nakedness' in Genesis 2 and 3. These themes are clearly discernible, he argues, when the biblical account is examined according to the traditional Masoretic divisions in the Hebrew text rather than the usual Christian chapter divisions, where the creation of a separate ch. 3 leads to a reading centred on 'the Fall'. Playing close attention to the Hebrew language of the text, Magonet develops the distinct stages in the separation and relation of man to the earth, to the animals, and later to woman. He depicts the ways in which this relationship of relatedness and difference is established and re-established before and after the eating of the fruit.

The second theme of 'nakedness' is central to man's (and woman's) relationship to God and to each other. The Hebrew word-play on subtlety/nakedness is closely scrutinized, and it is suggested that the sexual elements of later Christian and Jewish exegesis have been overstated and that 'nakedness' is more accurately related to the condition of being 'defenceless' than to sexuality. This interpretation offers an explanation of the text's concern with nakedness and the link to clothing in terms of defencelessness rather than 'sexual' shame. His examination opens a dialogue with the author of the next chapter, Calum Carmichael, on the question of the part that sexuality plays in the narrative.

Carmichael seeks to create an 'interpretative distance' between the text and its later Christian and Jewish interpretations. He highlights the tensions between human progress and God's intentions, and attempts to establish that the text itself suggests a meaning opposite to that of the inherited exegetical traditions. The text, he argues, offers neither mythical nor aetiological explanations of the origins of humanity and human nature, but tries to bring to consciousness matters usually passed over in daily life. Carmichael, too, argues against a 'Fall' reading, and advocates that the understanding of Eve's disobedience be considered as akin to civil disobedience (i.e. as commendable action) rather than as sin. To further set the Garden story in its Genesis setting, he contrasts it with the Cain and Abel narrative, in terms of its realism and subsequent reception.

In the last of the three chapters directly addressing the biblical text, John Sawyer seeks to present a 'new' interpretative framework for the understanding of the relationship between 'man' and God. He develops a frame for the elucidation of the text in terms of the elements in human nature that are to be considered as having been created 'in the image of God' and the factors which distinguish humanity from God. Sawyer's analysis details the association of 'man has become like one of us, knowing good and evil' (3.22) with the notions of wisdom, domination and the significance of the part that the snake plays in the narrative. He raises the question of whether our likeness to God persists after the climactic conclusions described at the end of ch. 3. He also discusses the issue of the limits of the likeness set by God and the adequacy of the interpretation of this conclusion as 'the Fall'.

These three papers utilizing different methodologies offer different perspectives on the meaning or meanings of the biblical text. Taken together, these three biblical scholars, in the very act of distancing themselves from the later Christian and Jewish traditions, succeed in establishing the dominant persisting themes of these traditions of exegesis. They also provide the broader textual context for the explications of the connections and associations forged in the text—associations and connections that are maintained and developed in different contexts in the historical exegetical traditions. More importantly, they present the tensions and questions in the text, both structural and semantic, that inspired the creativity of past commentators and continue to challenge interpreters.

The next two chapters focus on two significant developments. The first is the foundation of a tradition of exegesis stretching into the present day, while the second is thematic and is concerned with a particular textual motif, that of the garments of Adam and Eve.

Philip Alexander traces the growth of the Gnostic understanding of the Garden of Eden story, which he characterizes as 'the fall into knowledge'. The Gnostic reading of the Genesis text turned the biblical narrative 'on its head' and inverted the received meaning of the biblical account. But in these sources this startling re-reading of reversal was based on a detailed exegesis and analysis of the words and images of the Genesis text. Alexander addresses the question of eisegesis and the relationship of the interpreter to an 'authoritative' text and offers a brief account of the relationship of Gnosticism to Judaism.

The theme of the garments of Adam and Eve develops out of a history in Jewish, Christian, Gnostic, Hermetic, Manichaean, Mandaean, and Islamic sources of the reading together of Gen. 2.25, 3.7 and 3.21. Stephen Lambden concentrates upon these verses in the Bible and their interpretation in postbiblical Jewish writings as the framework for his account of the opening chapters of Genesis. He traces the three stages in the status of the first couples—from 'nakedness', via clothed in fig leaves, to 'coats of skin'. Lambden's chapter indicates the variety of Jewish interpretations and the formation of a 'mainstream' account of the understanding of the significance of the garments of Adam and Eve in the Jewish exegetical tradition. This particular tradition is of crucial importance for the understanding of later eschatological developments.

The contributions of Paul Morris and Deborah Sawyer focus on the interpretation of the Garden narrative in the New Testament, with particular reference to St Paul, and in the Jewish exegetical traditions. Sawyer examines the 'New Adam' in Pauline theology by directing her attention to the hermeneutics of the first-century writer against the background of the biblical text. She demonstrates the interpretative modes, especially the typological, employed in the Epistles in the cementing of the relationship of Jesus with the biblical Adam.

In my chapter, I trace the textual explorations of the rabbis, with particular reference to three historical phases in Jewish interpretation. Beginning with midrashic sources, I consider the central notion of exile, both of man and God, and its associations in the text and its interpretation. Reference is also made to the 'theological' implications of the commandments held to have been given to Adam, and thus to all humanity, based on the rabbinic exegesis of Gen. 2.16, and the part that the text plays in Jewish religious practice. I proceed by examining the exegetical developments via the philosophical and mystical sources and by brief reference to more recent interpretations.

In the first chapter of two that are concerned with mediaeval themes, Jennifer O'Reilly looks at the iconographical representation of the Eden narrative. She concentrates on the trees of Eden (2.9), particularly as found in illustrated manuscripts. She traces the development of the representation of the trees in terms of the Christian exegesis, both allegorical and typological, and the iconographical traditions of the Near East. It is of particular interest to note the visual associations of theological and devotional elements in the iconographical presentation of the complete salvific plan, centred on the two trees of Eden. It would not be incorrect to state that the tradition of Christian art is built upon the identification of 'First Adam' and 'Second Adam' (Christ) in the writings of St Paul. But in the iconographical tradition this 'typology' is often extended to 'First Eve' and 'Second Eve' (Mary); the apple and the communion wafer; the snake and Satan; and the tree and the crucifix. O'Reilly examines the tradition of each of the trees separately, the two trees together, and finally the mariological materials, to give an illustrated history of these developments and some indication of their full variety.

Helen Phillips discusses the 'Garden of Love and the Garden of the Fall' based on her examination of a number of central mediaeval English and French texts. Her chapter highlights the link, made by her selected sources, between the Garden of Eden and the garden of the Song of Songs, a connection already made in the rabbinic tradition, and, perhaps, within the biblical text itself. In this material, the garden of the Song of Songs represents, as in the Frankfurt Garden of Paradise, the inverted Garden of the Fall. Phillips concludes with an analysis of the two 'lewd' accounts derived from the folk-tale tradition which stress the association of the garden with the Genesis motifs of fruit trees and illegitimate sex.

Gordon Campbell and Paul Cantor explore the Edenic tradition in two great literary figures concerned with the Eden narrative—Milton and Blake. Campbell emphasizes that Milton's Eden derives from a multitude of sources, read by Milton in ten languages, from the Jewish and Christian exegetical traditions. After examining the two different accounts of Adam and Eve in *Paradise Lost*, Campbell concentrates on four themes—work, sex, entertaining, and Adam's request for a wife. He notes that Milton's understanding of the meaning of work is consistent with the Protestant work-ethic, and suggests that the God of *Paradise Lost* is not 'unlike his creator'. Milton's account of sexuality is used by Campbell to correct notions of Protestant antipathy and anxiety in this regard.

Paul Cantor addresses Blake's reading of Eden and focuses his attention on the internalization (into 'psyche') of the elements externally portrayed in the text. Blake concentrates on human nature and formulates a new account of man based on his vision of Eden. Cantor stresses Blake's identification of the artist with Eden and England with Eden against the background of the development of his 'speculative mythology'.

The chapters by Richard Roberts and Mark Corner look at the understanding of the Eden/Fall narrative in modern Christian theology. Roberts traces the doctrine of the Fall from its centrality in past Protestant theology to its secondary place in contemporary theological concerns. He discusses the difficulties of the attempts at the transformation of 'original sin' under the banner of Enlightenment optimism, and the collapse of such confidence in the aftermath of the First World War. Focusing on Karl Barth's theology and its reinstatement of a doctrine of the Fall within the context of his transcendentalist neo-orthodoxy, Roberts both presents a critique of the Barthian position and explores its legacy in modern and contemporary theologies.

Corner offers an interpretation of Barth's version of the Fall set in the context of the contemporary struggle for global management. Barth's 'myth of the Fall', Corner insists, may have an important part to play in developing a consciousness of both our human limitations and our human potentialities for good and evil.

The last three papers are concerned with contemporary issues and approaches to the Garden story. Deborah Sawyer begins with the portrayal of Eve in the Christian tradition and attends to three themes—the order of creation, Eve as the originator of sin, and the 'old' versus the 'new' Eve. On the basis of a distinction between feminists who seek to 'recover' Eve and those who reject the tradition in favour of some post-Christian position, she argues that while any feminist encounter with Christianity necessitates an attempt to 'resurrect' Eve, such 'resurrections' have to be 'radical' in the light of the tradition of the patriarchal 'possession' of Eve.

Christian typological interpretations of the Eden story are compared with Jungian archetypal readings in the chapter by Adrian Cunningham. He argues that Jungian readings represent a revival of the tradition of allegorical interpretation of the Bible and that therapeutic practice can be seen as a 'valuable contemporary application' of the 'moral sense' of Scripture. In the final chapter, Anna Piskorowski offers a Lacanian account of Genesis 3. She focuses on the Garden story as the narration of the passage of the first couple through the Oedipus and Electra crises and their entry into the 'symbolic order' and acceptance of social and family relationships.

The following chapters, in moving from an examination of the biblical text through discussion of the major traditions of its interpretation, allow the reader to follow particular lines of development and to trace the ways in which the Garden of Eden narrative has shaped the Western consciousness by its continual re-interpretation. The whole tradition of the exegesis of the Genesis text has developed by way of the exploitation of the gaps, the hints, the allusions in the text itself, as the text has been addressed to an endless series of presents. The history of interpretation demonstrates both the variety of interpretations and the ways in which they continue to arise out of the text. From ancient Israel until the present, major facets of human life and fundamental human relationships have been informed by this biblical text as reflected in the history of its interpretation.

The programme for biblical studies underlying this collection is, of course, only illustrated by the selected Genesis text. In future it is hoped that this approach will be applied to other biblical texts, such as the exodus narrative or the flood story, with the expectation that by tracing the history—broadly defined to include iconography, literature and exegesis—of the reception of a given text, we will discover much of value concerning both the text itself and the strategies and contexts of its interpretation.

Notes

1. Cited in an article entitled, 'Priests' Unholy Alliance' by Judith Judd, *The Observer* (London, 2 June 1985).

2. See L. White, Jr, 'The Historical Roots of Our Ecological Crisis', *Science* 155 (1967), pp. 1203-1207, for an example of the links forged between the basis of current ecological concerns and the Genesis text. The relationship between Adam's creation in the divine image and his dominion over nature is noted by both the Christian and Jewish exegetical traditions and modern scholars (e.g. G. von Rad, *Genesis* [Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1972]; C. Westermann, *Creation* [Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1974]; J. Barr, 'Man and Nature: The Ecological Controversy in the Old Testament', *BJRL* 55 [1972–73], pp. 9-32).

3. M. Bal, 'Sexuality, Sin and Sorrow. The Emergence of the Female Character (A Reading of Genesis 1–3)', *Poetics Today* 6 (1985), pp. 21-42; *idem, Lethal Love: Literary Feminist Readings of Biblical Love Stories* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1987).

4. P. Trible, 'Depatriarchalizing in Biblical Interpretation', *JAAR* 41 (1973), pp. 30-48; *idem, God and the Rhetoric of Sexuality* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1978). Trible's claim (1973) that the Bible can be 'depatriarchalized' led Mary Daly to respond that 'perhaps there would be enough salvageable material to comprise an interesting pamphlet' (*Beyond God the Father* [London: Women's Press, 1985], p. 205).

5. See H. Cixous and C. Clément, *The Newly Born Woman* (trans. B. Wing; Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1986 [1975]).

6. M. Wittig, *The Guèrillères* (trans. D. Le Vay; London: Picador, 1972). For example, Fay Weldon's *The Life and Loves of a She-Devil* (London: Hodder, 1984) can be considered as a re-telling of the tales of Adam, Eve and Lilith—'I will change myself' (p. 56) says Eve/Lilith as *she* embarks on the recreation of herself. See also Deborah Sawyer on Eve, Chapter 15 in this volume.

7. One of the strangest features of the use of the motifs from the garden of Eden narrative is the way in which the iconographical and other presentations become detached, as it were, from their contexts and take on seemingly independent existences. Aspects of our popular culture, past and present, are pervaded by Edenic images, and although the sources are almost always obscured they still disseminate 'popular' theologies. This area has yet to be researched in any systematic fashion.

In popular music, we not only find contemporary life identified with the biblical narratives but interpretations of the 'theological' issues raised by the text. For example, in the American folk song *Dese Bones Gwine to Rise Again*, a link is forged between 'fallen' Adam and the black slaves (in J.A. and A. Lomax [eds.], *American Ballads and Folksongs* [New York: Macmillan, 1934]). In the mediaeval Christmas carol, *Adam lay ybounden*, there is a type of 'fall upwards'—'Blessed be the time that apple taken was', and in *Christmas Eve*, another carol, the connection is made between Christmas and a return to Eden (*The Oxford Book of Carols* [London: Oxford University Press, 1943], pp. 386-88, 1-3). More recently, a rejectionist note is sounded in a hit single by the American-born singer, Bruce Springstein: 'And they tempt you with the pleasures that flesh does surely hold, They say Eve tempted Adam with an apple, man I ain't going for that' (*Pink Cadillac*, CBS Records, New York, 1984).

But in our contemporary popular culture, it is the once-bitten apple, usually red, which most obviously still resonates with the exegetical and iconographical traditions of the erotic, captured in the phrase, 'forbidden fruit'. This shorthand for 'naughty but nice', reflecting the Latin pun on 'malum'—meaning both 'apple' and 'evil'—is widely utilized to advertise the sale of such 'forbidden fruits'. For example, the logo of a large, red, 'Eve-bitten' apple is used both by a national chain of sex shops, and on the adult board game, 'Game, Sex and Match'. It is as if the detached symbol still alludes to other motif elements in the narrative, such as the attendant dangers, temptation, and, of course, as one suspects in this case, the rather empty promise of paradise. Sometimes the apple is combined with another biblical motif, as in the cover illustration of Emmanuelle Arson's novel, *Emmanuelle* (St Albans: Mayflower Books, 1975), where the partially peeled apple reveals a naked female bottom and the peel is found to be a coiled, smirking snake. Likewise the association between the nakedness of Eve and her 'relationship' to the snake is linked to the current tabloid fashion for displaying at least partially naked women in a recent cartoon in *Private Eye* (London, no. 657, 20 February 1987), where the snake informs Eve that he can get her on to page three of the Bible!

The bitten apple is also used defiantly as the logo of the women's publishing house, Virago. But here one can infer that the overtones of forbidden fruit are intentional. A bank (The National Bank of New Zealand) advertising a new savings account with the message 'Tempt Yourself' displays on its poster a red apple already bitten into by an enterprise-culture Eve. In connection with the current Aids epidemic, we have witnessed the bringing together of various Genesis themes—the forbidden, the dangerous, punishment, and loss of the Eden of a particular form of 'sexual freedom'—in our characterization and evaluation of this awesome disease. The bitten apple was used as the logo for the recent Channel 4 'Aids Brief' series of programmes shown on British television, and the apposite cartoons by Scarf visually link the above elements by depicting the snake as the virus (see, e.g., *The Sunday Times*, London, 8 February 1987, p. 26).

The notion of sexual paradise lies behind nightclubs called 'Adam and Eve' and the 'Garden'. Eden, however, is also conceived of as 'the natural'—for example, Eden holidays is a company specializing in naturist vacations. Sometimes the associations are hard to discern as in the case of Chestertons, the estate agents, and their recent offer of long leases on houses in 'Adam and Eve Mews' in 'Eden Close' (in Kensington, London). The advertisement comes complete with a bemused-looking couple who obviously already live there—they are clad in what one only assumes are fig leaves! (*The Sunday Times*, London, 18 May 1986).

The sheer pervasiveness of aspects of the Garden story (from the designation of the thyroid cartilage of the larynx as the Adam's apple to Steinbeck's *East of Eden*, Hemingway's *The Garden of Eden*, or Garcia Marquez's re-narration of the Eden story in *One Hundred Years of Solitude* [trans. G. Rabassa; London: Penguin Books, 1972]) is indicative of how deeply these images are rooted in our culture. Each reference selects and interprets different elements of the story drawing, implicitly or explicitly, on the interpretative traditions, but never quite losing the full contextual matrix of the biblical account.

8. For a recent exploration of the Christian notions of paradise, see C. Christian and B. Lang, *Heaven—A History* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1988). See also the insightful but eclectic study by W.A. McClung, *The Adventure of Paradise: Survivals of Eden and Jerusalem* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984); and the earlier study by H.R. Patch, *The Other World: According to Descriptions in Medieval Literature* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1950). On the combination of classical (Greek and Roman) and biblical notions of paradise, see F.E. and F.P. Manuel, 'Sketch for a Natural History of Paradise', *Daedalus* (Winter 1972), pp. 83-128; and H. Levin, *The Myth of the Golden Age in the Renaissance* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1969).

9. E. Fromm, *Ye Shall Be as Gods* (London: Cape, 1967).

10. On Edenic themes in Romantic literature, see L. Metzger, *One Foot in Eden* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1986). The title refers to Edwin Muir's poem, 'One Foot in Eden', in *Collected Poems 1921–1950* (London: Faber & Faber, 1952).

11. The understanding of Genesis 1–3 in the philosophical tradition (e.g. Spinoza, Kant, Schopenhauer, Nietzsche and Kierkegaard) has yet to be systematically presented. Kant in his essay, 'Concerning the Indwelling of the Evil Principle with the Good, or, On the Radical Evil in Human Nature' (first published in 1792 and later included as Book I of *Religion within the Limits of Reason Alone* [1793; trans. T.M. Greene and H.H. Hudson; New York: Harper & Row, 1960]) offers an analytical, rather than historical, account of Adam's sin and its consequences (pp. 37ff.). While Adam is portrayed as 'falling in sin' from a state of innocence, we find that 'in Adam all have sinned', that is we, unlike Adam, have an innate tendency to sin. Kant understands the narrative to indicate that Adam's sin was due to the exercise of his 'will' and that this exercise offers the hope of the exercise of the 'good will'. He understands the transformation to the 'New Adam' on the part of the individual to be 'an intellectual determination' (Book II, p. 68). Adam represents the first stage in the development of Christianity from a religion of revelation to the religion of reason.

Hegel spoke of having experienced a 'revelation' when in the 'dispute' between God and the snake he took the side of the snake! ('the serpent did *not* deceive the man', *Hegel's Introduction to the Lectures on the History of Philosophy* [trans. T.M. Knox and A.V. Miller; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1985], p. 179). Hegel identified Socrates with the biblical Adam (Pythia plays Eve's part) and understood the 'sin' of Adam to be the beginning of freedom, the source of philosophy itself, the origin of 'the life of the Spirit' in its ascent to self-consciousness—'The fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil—of the knowledge that is of reason out of itself—(is) the universal principle of philosophy for all later times'. The Garden story provides the ground for Hegel's philosophy in establishing the 'fact of estrangement' and the subsequent need for 'reconciliation', and represents a sort of 'epistemological fall'. See G.W.F. Hegel, *Lectures on the Philosophy of Religion (1827)* (trans. P. Hodgson *et al.*; Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988), pp. 146-47, 216-17, 442-45 ('The Fall'), also 438, 457; *Lectures on the History of Philosophy*, II (trans. E.S. Haldane and F.H. Simson; New York: Humanities Press, 1955); *Hegel's Introduction*, pp. 125ff.; *The Difference Between Fichte's and Schelling's System of Philosophy* (trans. W. Cerf and H.S. Harris; Albany: SUNY Press, 1977).

Lev Shestov (1866–1938), the Russian religious philosopher, utilizes the Eden story as the central and sustained motif for his rebellion against the dominance of reason and science (see his *Athens and Jerusalem* [1938] [trans. B. Martin; Athens, OH: Ohio University Press, 1966]). He writes: 'If it is necessary to choose between God who warns us against the fruits of the tree of knowledge of good and evil and the serpent who extols these fruits to us, the educated European cannot hesitate—he will follow the serpent' (p. 165). But he rejects the stance of the 'educated European' and advocates a return to Eden/freedom:

> The serpent said to the first man: 'You shall be like God, knowing good and evil'. But God does not know good and evil. God does not *know* anything. God *creates* everything. And Adam, before his fall, participated in the divine omnipotence. It was only after the fall that he fell under the power of knowledge, and at the same moment lost the most precious of God's gifts—freedom. For freedom does not consist in the possibility of choosing between good and evil, as we today are condemned to think. Freedom consists in the power and force not to admit evil into the world. . . Only when man, obeying the suggestion of a force hostile and incomprehensible to us, held forth his hands toward the tree did his mind fall asleep and did he become that feeble thing, subject to alien principles, that we now see (pp. 255-56).

12. *Wedding Preparations in the Country* (trans. E. Kaiser and E. Wilkins; London: Secker & Warburg, 1954), p. 85. This theme of the loss of the universal language has a long and complex tradition, especially among the post-Herder Romantics, and the disciples, the late eighteenth-century mythologists and linguists in their search for 'the Vulgate of Eden', the *ursprache*—Adamic speech—see G. Steiner, *After Babel* (London: Faber & Faber, 1975), pp. 58ff. The most influential 'contemporary' figure in this line of thinking is Walter Benjamin, the Jewish-messianic, Marxist theorist (*One-Way Street and Other Writings* [trans. E. Jephcott and K. Shorter; London: New Left Books, 1979], pp. 111-23). Benjamin's philosophy advocates an overcoming of the expulsion from Eden. This expulsion is a 'fall' from pure language ('The life of man in pure language was blissful', p. 121) and 'knowing' (*Erkenntnis*), to the contingent language of false 'knowledge' (*Wissen*). The 'Fall' breaks apart the inherent intimacy between words and their referents ('proper names' revealing themselves) and leaves man 'cursed' to labour, to manipulate 'cursed' nature (p. 121). The knowledge born of the eating of the Tree of Knowledge is instrumental (for the communication of abstractions—'things', 'objects' and 'judgments') and gives rise to the bourgeois 'subject' of this communi-

cation (which in turn generates the Law) and the 'objects' to be dominated—'there exists a fundamental identity between the word that, according to the serpent's promise, knows good and evil, and the word which serves as external communication' (p. 119). Post-Fall man has become but one object among others lost amid a world of arbitrary language (Babel). Benjamin argues that only by returning/remembering the origins of our 'expulsion' can we recall what we have forgotten—the unity of the 'language' of the Garden.

13. See F. Kafka, 'Reflections on Sin, Suffering, Hope, and the True Way', in *Wedding Preparations*, pp. 38-53; and N.N. Glatzer, 'Franz Kafka and the Tree of Knowledge', in A. Altmann (ed.), *Between East and West* (London: Horovitz, 1958), pp. 48-58.

14. See, for example, N. Frye, *The Great Code: The Bible and Literature* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1982). Frye writes of the 'elements of the Bible [having] set up an imaginative framework—a mythological universe. . . within which Western literature had operated down to the eighteenth century and is to a large extent still operating' (p. xi). It is the loss, or at least threat, to this framework that necessitates a study of the history of the interpretation of the Bible as the prerequisite for any engagement with Western literature.

15. Gunkel compared biblical *sagen* with other folk tales in his quest for the 'original forms'. The silliness of this approach is best exemplified by J.G. Frazer who insists on 'scientifically' re-writing the ending of the Garden narrative as the very opposite of that of the biblical text in line with the laws ('inversion') of such tales! His version recovers, by the use of the 'comparative method', what he considers to be the 'gay barbaric colours' of the original ('The Fall of Man', in his *Folklore in the Old Testament*, I [London: Macmillan, 1918], pp. 45-77). This tradition in a modified form continues today under the guise of structuralism. Drawing on the binary oppositions in the Genesis narrative (God vs. created world; Heaven vs. earth; God vs. man; creation vs. chaos; humans vs. animals; life vs. experience; life vs. death; man vs. woman; etc.) the structures are discerned and 'rules', based on other structural models, applied concerning their transformations (inversions, repetitions, variations). The now 'classic' study (E. Leach, *Genesis as Myth* [London: Cape, 1969], pp. 7-23) has no hesitation in identifying 'incest' as a major feature of his analysis. For recent structural analyses, see D. Patte and A. Patte, *Structural Exegesis: From Theory to Practice* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1978); D. Patte (ed.), *Genesis 2 and 3: Kaleidoscopic Structural Readings*, *Semeia* 18 (1980), pp. 1-164.

16. For a recent example of this approach, see H.N. Wallace, *The Eden Narrative* (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1985). He claims to recognize the unity of 'the J source' but on the basis of the two primary narrative sources (creation and garden), Wallace seeks to locate the various elements of the story in earlier 'pre-written' sources (pp. 183-87).

17. See G. von Rad, *Genesis* (London: SCM Press, 1972), pp. 73-102.

18. B.S. Childs, *Introduction to the Old Testament as Scripture* (London: SCM Press, 1979).

19. Cf. J.J. Jackson and M. Kessler (eds.), *Rhetorical Criticism* (Pittsburgh:

Pickwick Press, 1974). Although rhetorical critics have the great merit of taking as their starting point the 'received text' rather than the hypothetical pre-textual sources, their methods are closer to Gunkel than contemporary literary criticism. The same criticism might be levelled at J.L. McKenzie, 'The Literary Characteristics of Genesis 2–3', *TS* 54 (1954), pp. 541-72. Robert Alter's call for 'A Literary Approach to the Bible' (*Commentary*, December 1975, pp. 70-71 [cf. his 'Scripture and Culture', *Commentary*, August 1985, pp. 42-48) has been responded to on a number of fronts. See R. Schwartz (ed.), *The Book and the Text: The Bible and Literary Theory* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1990); and R. Alter and F. Kermode (eds.), *The Literary Guide to the Bible* (London: Fontana, 1989).

20. S.R. Driver, *The Book of Genesis* (London: Methuen, 1948 [1904]), p. 51.

21. See, for example, E.V. McKnight, *Postmodern Use of the Bible* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1988).

22. E.g. F.E. Schüssler, *Bread not Stone: The Challenge of Feminist Biblical Interpretation* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1984); *idem*, 'The Ethics of Interpretation: De-Centering Biblical Scholarship', *JBL* 107 (1988), pp. 3-17.

23. McKnight writes that criticism should 'view literature in terms of readers and their values, attitudes and responses' (*Bible*, p. 15).

24. Michael Fishbane's analysis of the patterns in Genesis (*Texts and Texture of Selected Biblical Readings* [New York: Schocken Books, 1979], pp. 1-39) runs very close to the patterned rabbinic reading found in, for example, the first chapter of *Genesis Rabbah*. Likewise, his *Biblical Interpretation in Ancient Israel* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1985) has obvious parallels with rabbinic exegesis.

THE THEMES OF GENESIS 2–3

Jonathan Magonet

I would like to begin with an obvious observation, but one which will help clarify my topic. When reading this section we inevitably consider it under the heading 'the Fall'. In this we are strongly influenced by Christian understandings of these chapters. In such a context it is probably no coincidence that the chapter divisions, which belong to a Christian version of the text, start at ch. 3 with the story of the snake and the subsequent temptation, whereas in the Hebrew text there is no division at this point at all. In fact the Masoretic tradition assumes one continuous unbroken piece of text from 2.4–3.15. At that point there is a textual separation between the verses relating the punishment of the snake and the verse about the punishment of the woman. A similar break follows after v. 16 separating this punishment in turn from that of Adam. This new section then continues until the next major division at v. 21.

The effect of starting with the Masoretic divisions is to encourage us to look at a number of elements that are present within the story without automatically subsuming everything at once under the topic of 'the Fall'.

Separations

One of the first topics that emerges is actually a continuation of a theme present in ch. 1, that of 'separations'. It is contained most obviously in the word-play on the name of the man, אדם who is taken from the 'dust' (עפר) of the 'ground' (אדמה) (2.7) and at the end of the section will return to it (3.19)—'until you return to the ground (אדמה) for from it you were taken, for dust (עפר) you are and to dust (עפר) you return'. The repetition of terminology here and the recurrence of the theme reinforce the view that the section does indeed run from 2.4 to at least 3.15 returning to its opening theme again at the close.[1]

The animals too are formed from the ground for the express purpose of providing a suitable companion for the man (2.19). A distinction is made between כל חית השדה (all living creatures of the field) and כל עוף השמים (all birds of the heavens). However, in the process of naming them, Adam subdivides this first category into two parts. 'The man gave names to all the בהמה [usually translated as 'cattle'], and to the birds of the heavens and to all the living creatures of the field.' Is this a significant distinction between 'cattle' and 'living creatures of the field'? One possible understanding would be to view the 'cattle' here as a generic term for domesticated animals, those which have a permanent relationship with man, while the phrase 'all living creatures of the field' refers to all others (cf. Gen. 1.24-26; 7.14, 21; 9.10; Exod. 20.10; Lev. 19.19; etc.). This reinforces the theme of separation and discrimination in terms of how man chooses and categorizes his environment. It also illustrates one aspect of biblical 'naming', the establishment of relationships. More significantly, the snake is described as being more cunning 'than all living creatures of the field', that is to say, the snake comes from that group defined as living apart from man.

It might be argued that the use of 'all' in this phrase merely indicates that we have here the same general term used at the beginning of the chapter, meaning the total animal population prior to this differentiation (cf. v. 9), but the word 'all' is also present in God's final judgment on the snake (3.14) where the new differentiation is maintained: 'cursed are you above all בהמה and above all living creatures of the field'. That is to say, in the process of naming the creatures, Adam has made a general distinction between domestic and wild animals, and in making that distinction some form of enmity has arisen between himself and the snake, either as a creature on its own, or even as a representative of the 'excluded' 'living creatures of the field'. This coincides in part with Francis Landy's reading of the snake's actions:[2]

> Animals were created to be partners of man, to assuage his loneliness (2.19-20). But they are not partners for man. . . 'And for Man, he did not find a helpmeet like unto him' (2.20). Instead they are living evidence of the failure of the attempt, and his imperfection alone. Woman then supercedes the animals, succeeding in being a partner where they were inadequate. But woman is man, a divided self. Man is thus still alone, amid the volatile frustrated creatures, his original companions. The serpent then has reason to resent the woman, a hatred that implicates both man and God, who rejected him.

If we accept that the man has made two categories of the animals then the process of choosing, selecting and differentiating has already led to the alienating of certain creatures within Eden itself even prior to the eating of the fruit.

That naming implies establishing a relationship is most clearly illustrated in the naming of the woman by Adam. God has made an אשה (2.22) which he brings to the man. 'The man said: This one, this time, bone of my bone and flesh of my flesh. This one will be called woman (אשה) because from the man (איש) this one was taken' (2.23). As the text reminds us in the next verse in reinforcing this sense of relatedness, 'therefore a man (איש) leaves his father and his mother and cleaves to his woman (אשה) and they become a single flesh'.

More poignant is Adam's second naming which comes after the eating of the fruit and the curses. Having named the 'gender' as a whole 'woman' the man now gives a particular name to his own אשה when he calls her חוה which is understood to mean 'life', for she is the mother of all the living (3.20).

To summarize, both man and animal separate themselves from the ground (אדמה) to which they will eventually return (explicitly in the case of the man, אדם, and presumably implicitly in the case of the animals). In establishing his relationship with the animals through the process of naming them (God having brought them to him with the express purpose of finding a suitable companion), Adam identifies those that will indeed be his domestic companions and separates off those that remain outside his domain. The fullest implications of this are actually spelled out in the case of the snake, for having led the woman astray, there will now be enmity between them and their progeny forever. In the same way, by virtue of eating the fruit, there will be estrangement between the man and the ground from which he was taken. Man who was born to 'serve' or 'work' the אדמה (2.5) finds it 'cursed' or 'banned' because of him (3.17). However, as Benno Jacob[3] has shown, this applies to Adam alone, and the curse is removed with the birth of Noah, the first person to be born following Adam's death (5.29). Yet most tragic, as von Rad points out,[4] is the gulf that has now been created between the man and his wife when Adam passes the blame for his deed onto her. Indeed, as Phyllis Trible observes,[5] this is the source of the distorted view of their relationship that will be spelled out in the punishment of the woman who will be dependent on Adam and under his rule. What should have been a relationship of equals, of corresponding partners, is to be reduced to one of dominance and dependence. But is this to be paradigmatic for all male–female relations or limited to this particular pair? Is it stated with approval or, as Phyllis Trible understands it, as a critique of male dominance?

> This statement is not licence for male supremacy, but rather it is condemnation of that very pattern. Subjugation and supremacy are perversions of creation. Through disobedience the woman has become slave. Her initiative and her freedom vanish. The man is corrupted also, for he has become master, ruling over the one who is his God-given equal.[6]

But as Francis Landy notes, the two separate views of male–female relationships continue to interact with each other:

> The two statements—2.24 and 3.16—'Therefore. . . a man shall cleave to his wife and they shall become as one flesh' and 'To your husband shall be your desire, and he shall rule over you'—are both projected into our world, and coexist there. They represent the poles of innocence and experience. Underneath the apparent injustice and cruelty of marital relations man still seeks out his wife and the sexes are equal; the woman's *tešûqâh* [desire] is a persistent reminder of this beginning.[7]

There remains one further estrangement that arises out of the eating of the fruit—namely that between Adam, or the couple, and God. There are many ways of reading the source of this. What is God doing in giving them special instructions about the forbidden tree? Is he warning them for their own good, or merely setting up the sort of temptation to which they must inevitably succumb? If the latter, is this some demonic trick by God or a way of leading them to a deeper understanding of their human attributes, in particular their inability to live in a childlike state within Eden and their responsibility to acquire independence. If certain religious traditions have insisted that this is evidence of humanity's rebellion against God and its sinfulness, there are other readings that see this as evidence of humanity's independence of spirit and God's way of leading humans to assert this quality, to grow up. However it is understood, the result of the story is a changed relationship with their creator, which is also exemplified through particular aspects of the story.

The word-play on the terms for 'nakedness' ('They were both of them naked' [ערומים, 2.25]) and 'subtlety' ('Now the serpent was more subtle' [ערום, 3.1]) has been brilliantly explored by Francis Landy,[8] and indeed his treatment of this whole section and its relationship to the Song of Songs is very rewarding.[9]

I would like to explore the meaning of their nakedness. The snake has promised them that on eating the fruit their eyes will be opened and they will be like gods, knowing good and evil (3.5). What this 'knowing good and evil' entails is not clear. From other biblical uses it can imply the knowledge that is not yet available to children (Deut. 1.39) or something as general as knowing and judging everything that is going on about one (compare 2 Sam. 14.17 with 14.20). Does it have an expressly moral sense, or is it linked to sexual propriety or to the issue of obedience and disobedience to God's authority?

One answer must lie in what they learn once their eyes are opened—namely that they are naked. If we explore the use of the two forms, עירום and ערום, that designate this 'nakedness' within the Hebrew Bible, the meaning seems to emerge clearly. In Job (1.21) and Ecclesiastes (5.14) the image is used of the child coming naked into the world and returning naked at death—lacking all possessions. The same image of the baby naked at birth is used more forcefully by Hosea of a woman stripped of her clothing (Hos. 2.5 [Heb.], 2.3 [Eng.]). In three other uses in Job (22.6; 24.7, 10) the word is used of the poor as being stripped of their clothing and similarly so in Isa. 58.7 and Ezek. 18.7, 16. (The image is used metaphorically of the underworld in Job 26.6.) In Amos 2.16, the hero will run away naked, stripped of his weapons and power, while in Isa. 20.2-4 the term refers to prisoners going naked into captivity (cf. Deut. 28.48). In Mic. 1.8 it refers to one stripped and naked in mourning. The remaining example (1 Sam. 19.24) is of Saul attempting to capture David who is staying with Samuel. Successive messengers are overcome by the spirit of God and prophesy. Saul too succumbs to this power and prophesies before Samuel, lying naked all day and night. Only in Ezekiel (16.7, 22, 39; 23.29) is there any sexual undertone, yet here again the overriding meaning is of a woman lying helplessly stripped and vulnerable.

The inescapable conclusion from these usages is that the primary significance of the Hebrew word ערום, 'nakedness' (in its various forms), is not sexuality at all but a state of defencelessness and helplessness, without possessions or power. For the first time, on seeing themselves through the eyes of God, the two human beings perceive their weakness, frailty and dependence. In this context, the making of clothing is an attempt to create some sort of real and symbolic protection, as well as marking a new consciousness of the differentiation between the two original parts of Adam that now have completely separate existences.

Such a reading helps us understand Adam's response when questioned by God. 'Your voice I heard in the Garden and I was afraid because I was naked and I hid' (Gen. 3.10). We focus on the thought that Adam was afraid because he had been disobedient. But it is also the first time that fear and the seeking of shelter and protection have entered the Garden, both being consequences of their understanding of their human frailty. Until now they could take their security for granted; from now on they must begin to fend for themselves. Until now they were not conscious of God's protection, but, in what almost seems like an afterthought to the story, that divine protection is restored. It is God who makes for them more adequate protective clothing of skin, in this way responding to their expressed need and restoring the relationship between them but in totally different terms. Man is now aware of his dependence on God for survival, but even though expelled from the Garden, God's protection still accompanies him and is available to him. Only Cain will feel himself so cursed and abandoned that he is dismissed from God's presence (Gen. 4.14), and even here God responds to Cain's prayer.

Conclusion

We have looked at two particular themes contained within our section. That of 'separations' continues a topic of ch. 1 and runs through the whole section. The second one involves the changing status of the man and woman before God and in a typically biblical way is connected to concrete images and words (nakedness/clothing) rather than to abstract expressions or concepts.

Our starting point has been the close reading of some parts of the section, but there are a number of other elements that could be similarly explored. To list a few of them:

1. Much play is made of the nature of the trees in the garden, 'pleasant of appearance and good for eating' (Gen. 2.9), but when Eve looks upon the Tree of Knowledge there are significant transformations of these qualities (3.6). Francis Landy explores these changes and the way in which the narrator gives us sympathetic insight into her state of mind. 'The question of obedience is not faced. Instead of a malignant sinner, we have an innocent, i.e. undisciplined, child, responsive to her inner promptings.'[10] In broader terms, many questions of human consciousness are raised here, as well as our curiosity and ability to rationalize—but are these condemned or celebrated or

both? Certainly the subtlety of the snake's technique deserves further discussion both for the way the text seems to appreciate it and for the more difficult question of how far it is perceived by the writer as internal or external to the woman's thought processes.

2. Although scholars have had difficulties with the presence of two trees in the garden, they help us focus on the question of man's limited life span—a topic explored not only in this section but within the whole of the opening chapters of Genesis with the different ages of the antediluvian and postdiluvian figures. In such a context, the title of Eve as 'mother of all the living' needs further study, as does the relationship between mortality and procreation.

3. The nature of the Garden itself and the significance of the rivers that flow from it, with the precise but curiously inconsequential information given about them, raise other areas to explore.[11] In particular the very nature of the role of the man within God's creation. Is there any significance in the fact that when in Eden he is to 'work/serve' (Heb. עבד) and also 'guard' (Heb. שמר) the garden but when expelled he is only to work/serve the ground (compare 2.15 with 2.5; 3.23)? More could also be said about the nature of the man and his relationship to the 'ground' from which he came.

All of these and other topics help remind us of the richness of this section and the wide range of themes it contains. I began by reference to 'the Fall' and the degree to which that term has influenced our thinking about the contents. I have suggested that there are more dimensions and ambiguities in the events described here than one single term could suggest. Let me close with two teachers who in different ways were readers of and commentators on the Hebrew Bible. The first, Franz Kafka, reminds us of the reason for the expulsion:

> Why do we lament the fall of man? We were not driven out of Paradise because of it, but because of the tree of Life, that we might not eat of it.[12]

But the second, Martin Buber, suggests a purpose for the expulsion:

> From the seat, which had been made ready for him, man is sent out upon a path, his own, the human path. That this is the path into the world's history, that only through it does the world have a history—and an historical goal—must, in his own way, have been felt by the narrator.[13]

As we lament the exit from the garden of the creator we also celebrate the entry into the creator's world.

Notes

1. Cf. U. Cassuto, *A Commentary on the Book of Genesis: From Adam to Noah* (trans. I. Abrahams; Jerusalem: Magnes, 1961), p. 169.

2. F. Landy, *Paradoxes of Paradise* (Sheffield: Almond Press, 1983), pp. 233-34.

3. B. Jacob, *The First Book of the Bible: Genesis* (ed. and trans. E.I. Jacob and W. Jacob; New York: Schocken Books, 1974), p. 30.

4. G. von Rad, *Genesis* (trans. J. Mark; London: SCM Press, 1972), p. 91.

5. P. Trible, 'Depatriarchalizing in Biblical Interpretation', in *The Jewish Woman* (ed. E. Koltun; New York: Schocken Books, 1976), pp. 227-28.

6. Trible, 'Depatriarchalizing', p. 227.

7. Landy, *Paradoxes*, p. 249.

8. Landy, *Paradoxes*, pp. 220ff.

9. Landy, *Paradoxes*, pp. 220-65.

10. Landy, *Paradoxes*, pp. 242-43.

11. M. Fishbane, *Text and Texture: Close Readings of Selected Biblical Texts* (New York: Schocken Books, 1979), p. 17.

12. P. Goodman, *Kafka's Prayer* (New York: Schocken Books, 1976), p. 29.

13. M. Buber, *Good and Evil* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1952), p. 80.

THE PARADISE MYTH: INTERPRETING WITHOUT JEWISH AND CHRISTIAN SPECTACLES

Calum M. Carmichael

No sophisticated biblical scholar, standing aside from Jewish or Christian tradition, today interprets the paradise story as a fall into a chasm from a state of innocence and bliss. As Anthony York points out, Yahweh's response to Eve and Adam's consumption of the fruit, 'The man has become like one of us' (Gen. 3.22), does not suggest any notion of a descent.[1] The later, pious understanding of the story is in fact a classic example of how a text has been misinterpreted to mean the opposite of its originally intended meaning.[2] That meaning, both in the Eden story and in the Babel story (Gen. 11.1-9), perceives God as inimical to the laudable human striving for progress, be it the desire for the capacity to know good and evil, or the coming together of all people to ensure peace and prosperity. As David Daube points out in reference to the two stories, it cannot surprise that human beings attribute malevolence to forces beyond their control, especially in times of little or no technological assistance.[3] In so far as Judaism and Christianity acknowledge a Satan figure, they too testify to supernatural, anti-progressive forces.[4] Their identification of the serpent as Satan (for example, Wis. Sol. 2.24; Rev. 12.9; 20.2) is, however, misplaced.

Once biblical material was perceived as a unitary work of God-given instruction and guidance, it was inevitable that all actions of the (Israelite) God(s) would come to be interpreted as somehow just, benevolent and in the interests of human welfare. This historical development would obscure the original significance of those texts in which the deity is aligned with evil; for example, he is prepared to slaughter the innocent along with the wicked (Gen. 18.23); to instigate Joseph's sale into slavery (Gen. 45.4-8); to harden the pharaoh's heart and prolong Israel's suffering (Exod. 4.21; 7.3; 9.12); to visit the iniquity of the fathers upon their sons (Exod. 20.5; 34.7); and to cause the Israelites to err from his ways (Isa. 63.17).[5] The fact that Satan does figure in some later biblical texts (for example, Satan in 1 Chron. 21.1, but Yahweh in 2 Sam. 24.1) would have aided, not hindered this development. To be sure, other influences would have contributed to the misinterpretation of these early stories in Genesis. Their focus upon human striving against a hostile, jealous God, with the accompanying view that human beings are themselves God-like, is not helpful to those who came to use the Bible for the exercise of their religious authority. There are also psychological reasons why the original meaning can arouse an ambiguous response: fear of success, for example, can be as much of a problem as fear of failure. What follows is an analysis of the related Adam and Eve–Cain and Abel stories in an attempt to restore a more appropriate perspective in which to seek their original significance.

Like so much biblical material, and not just in the book of Genesis, the story of Adam and Eve is manifestly interested in origins, in first-time happenings. It is an interest born of intellectual curiosity. By observing the world as they see it, the ancient sages take pleasure—and I emphasize this aesthetic element in their procedure—in creating an artificial, totally unreal picture of a mythical past in order to highlight their current views about, for example, gods and human beings, human beings and animals, males and females. For these sages, origins are really observations or reflections that have been given, presumably in the interests of easier comprehension, a pseudo-historical setting. The aim is not, despite appearances, to explain anything, but to bring to consciousness matters that tend to pass without even minimal reflection.

The initial state of Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden is an undifferentiated one. The man and the woman, like the animals, eat, drink and are naked and without shame. To be sure, there are differences between the man and the woman and between the human couple and the animals. But these differences are not significant. The terms man–woman (אשה/איש) draw attention to their basic similarity. Likewise, human beings are not marked off from animals if when naked they do not show the civilizing influence of shame.[6]

In evaluating the role of Eve, two readily recognizable problems arise. Why, aside from the need to convey an initially undifferentiated state, is her birth such that she is taken from the man? And why is the desire for knowledge first channelled through her and not through the man? In each case either the situation depicted is unreal, as in the example of her birth from a man, or abnormal in terms of who is most closely associated with the acquisition of knowledge—the males—in the society whose literary work this Genesis myth represents.

The untrue-to-life nature of the two situations is consonant with other aspects of the Eden story. Life broken up by death has not yet occurred and, indeed, the unreal prospect of living forever exists. The man and the woman are different from all other (certainly Hebrew or Near Eastern) men and women in that being naked they do not experience shame. The serpent, unlike even animals in fables, has no characteristic remotely resembling a real serpent,[7] but is alert to knowledge that only the gods possess at this time.

Each of these odd, counter-human, or unreal characterizations is reversed on account of Eve's acquisition of the knowledge of good and evil. This acquisition constitutes, from the point of view of the gods, a hostile act against them because it blurs the distinction between gods and humankind. By way of punishment and with the intention of retaining the distinction, the gods in turn introduce the fundamental distinction between life and death that is familiar to all human experience. Concurrent with this distinction are the new, true-to-life experiences of the serpent, woman and man. From being a creature higher than the animals (and higher in the sense of more God-like because of its awareness of good and evil than the woman and the man in their primitive, animal-like state) the serpent becomes the most despised, the lowest of creatures. Moreover, instead of the prospect of life constituting the serpent's and the woman's shared motivation, each will now threaten death to the other.[8]

The woman had come forth painlessly from the man (during a deep sleep), but now she will, in pain, bring forth offspring. Her relationship to the man is changed in another significant way on account of her interchange with the serpent. The serpent in his shrewdness (*'arum*) had aroused her desire for the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil.[9] In eating it, and in influencing Adam to do so also, both became aware of their nakedness (*'erom*), their consciousness of sexual desire.[10] The similarly sounding words indicate the connection between the serpent's intention and its fulfilment: he desired her to acquire knowledge, she acquired it along with a sense of shame. In this new state of the awareness of sexuality, which involves a sense of the different nature of the male and the female, her desire—the word is *tešuqah* and its sexual meaning reminds us of the sexual element that is hinted at in the serpent's communion with Eve—will be toward her husband and not toward the serpent. Her husband, whom she had influenced, and not the serpent, will now rule over her. That a comparison between the serpent and the man is playing a role in the formulation of Eve's punishment is perhaps to be seen also in regard to the children whom she will have by her husband, and who will in turn be in conflict with the serpent's offspring.

The reversal of the man's fortune is more explicit. His life of ease and plenty, where his toil is pleasant because the rewards are readily attainable food and drink, is changed to a life of hardship and constant awareness of the barren nature of his nutritional sources.

The recognition that an overall concern with certain distinctions motivates the composition of the material is crucial for its proper understanding. More evidence of the pervasiveness of the concern will be forthcoming when the Cain and Abel story is related to the Adam and Eve story. In seeking a background in Ancient Israel for such a contrived interest in drawing distinctions and in the use of antithetical effects, the Wisdom tradition is foremost, even though examples can be found in almost all other writings: laws, prophetic sayings and narrative.[11] The book of Proverbs, for example, lays out a wealth of distinctions that are, in many instances, polar in character—wise and foolish, rich and poor, diligent and slothful, virtuous woman and loose woman. This polar feature even extends, as can be readily observed in the book of Ecclesiastes, but also in the book of Proverbs ('Answer not a fool according to his folly', 26.4; 'Answer a fool according to his folly', 26.5), to a fondness for bringing together contradictory views in a deliberately unresolved way.[12]

While it is commonly recognized that the Adam and Eve story overlaps in a general way with the concerns of the Wisdom tradition,[13] a closer look is called for. The association of the woman with the knowledge of good and evil is a useful starting point. In the book of Proverbs, the frequent interplay between the admonitions to acquire wisdom and the warnings about the attractions of loose women (or, less often, advice about faithfulness to one woman) suggests that the sages work with the assumption that there is no separating a man's desire for knowledge from his desire for a woman. The male's attraction to a woman is a matter for wonder (Prov. 30.18, 19). The sage observes the phenomenon but it lies beyond his comprehension.[14] The question, whence comes this double desire, one inextricably linked to the other, brings us close to the doubtless earlier mode of intellectual probing that underlies the Genesis myth. The myth's concrete attempt at explanation had Adam and Eve's awareness of nakedness constitute both sexual desire, the attraction of opposites, and a knowledge of (the opposites) good and evil.

It is no surprise that in the sapiential tradition, Wisdom became personified as a woman (Prov. 9.1-6; cf. 1.20-23; 8.1-35).[15] Moreover, she is depicted as a certain kind of woman, exceedingly attractive and beckoning in a compelling way, to the end that she might bestow her favours of intelligence and discernment upon young men. By means of the principle *imitation par opposition* she is the opposite—a polar effect doubtless consciously intended—of the loose woman and adventuress so often depicted in the book of Proverbs (2.16-19; 5.3-20; 6.24-35; 7.5-27). A number of women conform to the Wisdom ideal of beauty and intelligence in the biblical and extrabiblical tradition: Abigail (who at one point is married to her opposite, Nabal [Folly]), Esther and Judith.

Other Wisdom elements appear in the Adam and Eve story. The fear of God is said to be the beginning of knowledge (e.g. Prov. 1.7), and this perception also emerges in Genesis. When Adam and Eve become aware of their nakedness, which means that they have acquired a sense of shame, fear comes over them and they hide from God. There is an integral connection between fear and shame.[16] In positive terms, shame is what raises humankind above the animals and makes for civilized life. The consequence of hiding from God is, and the text is explicit about it, the consciousness of possessing knowledge. Moreover, their minds are now open to learning what will befall them in the future: they are made aware of the disharmony between serpents and human beings, between the ground and man's tillage of it, and between women and their offspring. Such enlightenment as is provided to them is not the buoyant kind of knowledge that is offered to the young men of the book of Proverbs. It is, we shall observe, very much in line with the view of knowledge that is expressed in the book of Ecclesiastes.[17]

Another Wisdom aspect of the deity's pronouncements to the serpent, Eve and Adam is the correspondence that is fashioned between their past situation in Eden and their future existence. In Wisdom teaching it is axiomatic that a man's early conduct determines his life to come. His future situation will mirror the content of his past one. The view is such a dominant one that it extends well beyond the confines of didactic counsel. When Jacob was cheated on his wedding night in not obtaining the younger sister, Rachel, because of the substitution of the elder sister, Leah, he was being paid back in reverse fashion for his earlier action against his elder brother, Esau. Jacob had cheated him by acting his part in order to obtain Esau's special blessing as the firstborn son.[18] A sophisticated embellishment of the view is found in such larger compositions as the Joseph story, Jacob's last words to his sons (Gen. 49), and Moses' farewell speech to the children of Israel (the book of Deuteronomy). The true-to-life disassociations experienced by the serpent, Eve and Adam are mirroring reversals of their prior harmonious relationships, because their conduct was diametrically opposed to what was (inappropriately from an enlightened perspective) prescribed for them.

An interesting feature of the Genesis story is the pre-wisdom, animal-like character attributed to Adam and Eve. This attempt to contrast the wisdom and pre-wisdom states for the purpose of bringing out the distinctive features of the human condition is paralleled in later Wisdom texts. In working with the contrast, the preacher in the book of Ecclesiastes goes so far as virtually to eliminate it (3.18-21). He concludes on the note that, having considered the knowledge about the fate of men and beasts, there is nothing better than that a man should enjoy his work, the implication being that such oppressive knowledge is a burden that one might wish to be without. Much emphasis is given to this notion that the only positive value is to utilize one's means to enjoy one's appetite (Eccl. 2.24; 3.22; 8.15; 9.7-10; cf. 6.1-6), the view recalling the value that is placed upon life in the pre-wisdom Eden. Part of the wry view of the Genesis author is that the awareness of the toil of labour after man acquired the knowledge of good and evil contrasts with the unthinking enjoyment of work beforehand.

In regard to his thinking about wisdom, the stance taken by Agur in Proverbs 30 is similar to that of the Genesis author. Each is conscious of wisdom as having an unattainable aspect. Agur thinks of himself on a level lower than a man in order to contrast his distance from the deity's knowledge of things.[19] In Genesis, the attempt to focus on the origin of human knowledge involves the distancing of man from God by first conceiving of man as animal-like. Agur does achieve, as do Adam and Eve, the ability to contrast good and evil although, again like Adam and Eve, the penetration of all knowledge is beyond him. Interestingly, two matters that he cites as quite beyond his comprehension are the way of a serpent on a rock and the way of a man with a woman (Prov. 30.19). In Genesis, the serpent is given an incomprehensible role in the myth,[20] and the attraction between the sexes is a major theme that is presented less in terms of understanding—the statement about why a man leaves his father and mother to cleave to a wife is the exception, and even that statement stands out from the rest of the material—and more in terms of observations about their roles. In other words, an explanation of the way of Eve with Adam and Adam with Eve is not attempted, even though the discovery of their nakedness is a central motif.

In the Genesis myth and the book of Ecclesiastes there is a shared pessimism about the nature of knowledge. On balance, both consider knowledge or wisdom a positive thing, although barely so (cf. Eccl. 2.13, 14; 7.11, 12). It is surely correct to argue, as Daube does, that for the author of the Genesis myth, Adam and Eve's initial animal-like state is a mark of horrible primitivity.[21] For Daube the story is not about a fall, but like the Prometheus myth, a rise, in that humankind acquires knowledge that sets it above the animal world and on the way to civilized life. But in my view this rise, like civilized life, is dignified as much by the consciousness of its burdens as by that of its achievements. The discernment that Adam and Eve attain is the consciousness of pain in childbirth, a sense of the dependence of the woman upon the man, and an awareness of the harshness of labour. The animals do not ask the why of things, but human beings are both dignified and burdened by such questioning. The attitude revealed to the acquisition of knowledge is accurately expressed in Eccl. 1.18, 'For in much wisdom is much grief: and he that increaseth knowledge increaseth sorrow'. The punishments in the Genesis myth are to be read in the light of this sentiment. In both works, successful material labour is detached from, even opposed to, the acquisition of knowledge. The contrast underlines the uncertain value attributed to knowledge.[22]

In Eccl. 7.25-29, the preacher's search for wisdom leads to a negative result: one should avoid becoming a fool. His pursuit brings to mind the attractions of a woman and this focus is accompanied by the reflection that to respond to her is to invite a fate worse than death. In Genesis, there exists the same combination of a deflated optimism about knowledge and the awareness of sexuality; and the result is not immediate death, as had been threatened, but a life of the mental awareness of hardship and disharmony.

Birth, beginnings, the origin of things is typically a Wisdom focus.[23] The book of Ecclesiastes opens with thoughts on the nature of the created world (1.4-7). Reflection upon its features results in the observation that things have been that way from the beginning (Eccl. 3.15; cf. 1.9, 10). Since men and beasts turn to dust, from dust they must have come (Eccl. 3.20).[24] The aetiology is applied to Adam; he was made from dust and to dust he must return. Reminiscent of the unreal aspect of the Genesis myth when it works out the first, pleasant state of Adam in Eden, is the strange proposition that a man who has no beginning is better than both a man who has lived and died and one who is yet alive (Eccl. 4.2, 3; cf. 6.3; 7.1, 8). In Genesis, the Adam who possesses no shame, no knowledge of good and evil, cannot, even in the world of the imagination, go anywhere; he is too unreal to have the beginnings of a real-life existence. Underlying such an interest in non-beginnings—the man who is envied because he has not yet come into existence and the unreal Adam in Eden—is probably the viewpoint that *au fond* one is not really able to know the beginnings of things (Eccl. 11.5).

Cain and Abel

Only in relation to the Adam and Eve story can the story of Cain and Abel be properly appreciated; and only in the wider context of wisdom can the many connections be explained. Eve's ability to discriminate between good and evil causes the gods to discriminate against humankind by imposing upon it the distinction between life and death. The same elements, the relationship between God and human beings, human beings and animals, life and death, but especially the role of discrimination in human affairs, re-appear in the Cain and Abel story. At the same time the typical Wisdom devices of reversal and contrast are put to work. Thus, instead of the view that God is antagonistic to the human capacity to know good and evil, he is cast in the opposite role of counsellor, a role that is more typically associated with biblical thinking on the subject. Likewise, life is associated with Eve, not in a form reminiscent of her own unreal origin nor in relation to the Tree of Life, but by the birth of a child, Cain, and then by another, Abel. It is emphasized that God aided her in granting such life (Gen. 4.11), in contrast, for example, to his denial of the Tree of Life. Cain is eventually to kill Abel and hence death has a human and not a divine origin as in the Adam and Eve story.[25]

To comprehend the Adam and Eve–Cain and Abel material, its preoccupation with the handling of distinctions has again to be emphasized. This concern takes us in the direction of Wisdom circles. The word *bin* ('to discern') has probably the basic meaning 'to become separated, be distinct', and instruction in the book of Proverbs, for example, is designed to reach understanding (*binah, tebunah*), especially to separate foolish behaviour from wise.

In the Adam and Eve story the distinction between gods and human beings is central. It is recognized that such a distinction exists, or has to be invented, and the visitation of death upon humankind is seen as necessary to maintain it. The failure to keep the two kinds of food separate had blurred it. But this failure involved eating from the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil, that is, something to do with the making of distinctions.

In that the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil is food in a figurative sense, it was sophistic of the deity to distinguish between it and the other food in the garden. The deity had been deceitful in claiming that by eating from the Tree of Knowledge, Adam and Eve would die.[26] The serpent made Eve realize that this particular 'food' can cause her to 'see', that is, it was food in the sense of insight and awareness. By eating both it and the real food in the garden she was in fact 'seeing', exercising discrimination. In a way, her recognition was of a kind with the well-known Deuteronomic statement about not living by bread alone, but by wise counsel also (Deut. 8.3). It was necessary to eat both kinds of food in order to realize the difference. To eat both did not therefore betoken an indiscriminate act. Initially it appeared that way, especially because the deity had commanded Adam to eat one and not the other.[27]

In the story of Cain and Abel, the situation is one in which a man offers God food instead of the other way round, but it is God who again makes a distinction between one kind of food and another. He eats Abel's animal offering but does not eat Cain's vegetable one. The distinction between the two kinds of food is again surrounded by confusion.[28] Cain presumably fails to understand that any acceptance of a sacrifice by God is a benefit in that it bestows life upon humankind. After the flood, for example, God accepted a sacrifice and it prompted his continuance of life on earth.[29]

Whereas the serpent gave counsel to Eve about how to respond to the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil that was denied to her, God counselled Cain about how to respond to the denial he had just experienced. The serpent instructed Eve that the tree was not death-bringing, and her eyes were opened. Wisdom lights up a man's countenance, according to Eccl. 8.1 (cf. 2.14). Cain's countenance fell when God declined his offering and Cain was consumed with anger, the passion that is so contrary to the exercise of wisdom (Eccl. 7.9; Prov. 15.1). God's counsel was that if Cain conducted himself properly in the situation in which he found himself, there would be a 'a lifting up', presumably a reference to his countenance being raised by wisdom, an effect that would be the equivalent to the opening of the eyes. If not, sin, like a beast that awaits its prey, would take possession of him. This beast-like influence, in contrast to the serpent that directed Eve and Adam in obtaining wisdom and in seeing that the Tree of Knowledge was not fatal, would prompt Cain to a violent act of folly.

The significant reversal of view from the one underlying the Adam and Eve story is that God's negative attitude to human discernment has become a positive one.[30] More precisely, the difference is also that after Eden, God recognizes, or has to recognize, that human beings possess the means of employing the knowledge of good and evil but require instruction and influence.[31] For example, Adam, the male, *knew* Eve, the female, and with God's aid a child was born. The situation after the flood is comparable in that God changed from a hostile attack on humankind to an acceptance of, or accommodation to, the basic good and evil character of the human condition, and sought to work with and support human beings.

If the important distinction in the Adam and Eve material is that there is a difference in kind between gods and human beings, the visitation of death upon the latter serving to illustrate the difference, the key to an understanding of the Cain and Abel material is that no distinction in kind exists in Cain's relationship to Abel. His slaughter of him, his visiting death upon him, was therefore wrong. Cain failed to exercise a proper sense of discrimination and the nature of his failure can be observed in some detail.

When God questioned Cain about Abel's absence Cain impudently responded, 'Am I my brother's keeper?' The irony of this statement is not simply that Abel was a keeper of sheep and Cain was not, and God has responded to Abel's offering but not to Cain's: why then should he, Cain, be responsible for addressing himself to the question of his brother's absence, as if he were his brother's keeper.[32] It is additionally, and more importantly, unwitting, self-convicting irony. When Cain denies that he is his brother's keeper, the analogy he has in mind is a shepherd with a sheep. It is permissible to kill a sheep, as Abel had done. However, since by this analogy Cain is not his brother's keeper, by his own admission he acknowledges that no proper difference in status exists between himself and his brother to warrant killing him, as a shepherd might a sheep. His is a confusion of the categories, men and animals.[33]

The immediate cause of Cain's treatment of Abel was God's consumption of Abel's sacrifice. The question arises as to why they wished to give sacrifices in the first place. The answer is that they sought to obtain life from the deity, just as their mother had produced them with his aid. The reason for pursuing life in this way was because of the denial of access to the Tree of Life. Life after Eden had to be sought, for example, by shepherding and tillage. Even after the murder this notion prevails in that Cain continued to struggle for his life. At every turn God wishes to be associated with this struggle, in contrast to his wishing death upon them after they had consumed his food and had threatened to become God-like.

This contrast can be further elucidated. The acquisition of the knowledge of good and evil on the part of Eve and Adam had been perceived by God to threaten the distinction between gods and humankind. In this context the deity desired to keep the gap as great as possible. To this end, he introduced death to the human scene and thus prevented human beings from sharing the unending life of the gods. Knowledge, in this story, was viewed as enabling human beings to attain the status of divinity and the development could not be hindered.

The orientation of the Cain and Abel story is initially of an opposite kind. Men offer sacrifices to the deity so that they might be in sympathetic contact with him for the purpose of obtaining good and averting evil. In this regard, offering sacrifice is like knowing good and evil in that both raise men upward in the direction of divinity. In accepting Abel's sacrifice, God permits a human being to close the gap between men and gods—the opposite of the situation in the Adam and Eve story. Just how closely the two stories eventually parallel each other is to be seen in the irruption of death into the Cain and Abel story at this point. Cain kills Abel because the latter's sacrifice was accepted and his was not. This time, however, death has a human source and not a divine, but in both stories the result is the same: the gap between the gods and humankind is made more distant. Abel's communion with the deity is not enhanced but is reduced to the cry of his spilled blood, and Cain, like his father, loses contact with the fruit-yielding earth, and worse, loses the protection of God's presence. It has to be noted, however, that, contrary to the Adam and Eve story, it is human action, not divine, that is instrumental in causing the gap, and that whereas the divine action was a response to human beings' manifesting discrimination, Cain's action flowed from his lack of it.

Knowledge in the Cain story can be interpreted as a capacity to discriminate, in which the deity involves himself because he wishes to maintain a relationship with human beings. When God distinguished between two types of sacrifice, it may be inferred that the intention was to have men recognize distinctions—animals and vegetables, shepherd and tiller, men and animals, gods and men—and, further, how to handle them.[34] This counselling role was directed at Cain's anger and lack of discernment after God had looked with favour upon Abel's sacrifice.[35] Cain was instructed in typical Wisdom fashion. Avoid anger, incline to the good and eschew the evil, and let not sin be the master.

Even the role of punishment in the story reveals this helpful, counselling role on the part of the deity, again in contrast to the nature of punishment in the Adam and Eve story. The scene after the murder in which God asks, 'Where is Abel?' recalls the scene in Eden after God had been offended by Adam and Eve's action and asked Adam, 'Where art thou?' In each instance the offence concerns the ground in some peculiar sense—eating from the tree and blood crying out from the ground. In each instance a consequence of the offence is that Cain, Adam and Eve hide themselves from God, Cain as the inevitable result of the punishment imposed on him, and Adam and Eve as an immediate reaction to their new-found knowledge. Eve and Adam's acquisition of the knowledge of good and evil is interpreted by the deity as an action directed against himself, and the result is that the punishment comes from God and is worked out in terms of the offender's previous condition. Cain's offence is against Abel with the result that the punishment comes from the direction of the dead Abel and is worked out in relationship to Cain's prior occupation as a tiller. Thus Abel's blood is lodged in the ground, has acquired his strength, and exacts vengeance on Cain by denying him, a tiller of the ground, its strength.

Like Adam and Eve whose state was changed from one of ease and rest to adversity and unrest, Cain's changes from a settled agricultural life to a state of wandering. This, his punishment, has the consequence that it enlightens him to the nature of his new state. He discerns that his punishment has two aspects, rootlessness, which is a just aspect, because it is related to his offence, and enforced hiddenness from God's presence. Taken together they constitute a punishment heavier than he deserves and he fears for his life. God agrees with this assessment, and responds to Cain's apprehension by placing a protective mark on him with a view to preserving his life. Additionally, he threatens sevenfold vengeance on anyone who kills Cain.

This apparently strange combination of punishment and sympathy is again to be explained by contrasting it with the Adam and Eve story. Instead of God's opposition to the human situation (for example, his threat of punishment with regard to the tree is intended to prevent Adam from obtaining discrimination), in the Cain and Abel story he is on the side of humanity and seeks to instil in him an understanding of things; for example, his threat with regard to a potential attack upon Cain is intended to prevent the indiscriminate killing of Cain. The contrast can been seen in another light. For Cain, God seeks to perpetuate life in the normal sense and he uses death, or the threat of it, to this end. A contrary situation had prevailed in Eden. Life in a sense not known to human beings was denied them because they were not allowed access to the Tree of Life, and death, which was introduced through the process of nature, intervened. Even more precise is the contrast that is provided by the role of protection in each story. Cain's life is protected from violence by the threat of death to the potential aggressor, whereas life had been withheld from his parents by the protection of the Tree of Life by violent means, namely, by the flaming sword that was placed at the entrance to Eden.

God had not wanted humankind to possess knowledge, but when they attain it, it is indeed a knowledge of both good and evil. Cain, priding himself on knowing that his relationship to his younger brother is not that of a shepherd to a sheep, nonetheless acts as a shepherd might towards a sheep and evilly slaughters his brother. He is punished, but his punishment produces discernment and God in response protects him. The result is a good one for Cain. From a dangerous state of wandering he proceeds to build a city which probably represents protection, freedom from violence and potential help.[36] Cain's exercise of the knowledge of good and evil in his recognition of the nature of his punishment and its implications is brought about by something close to the disciplinary correction that is associated with the human acquisition of wisdom. Eve's mode of acquiring it, apparently effortlessly, but then to be followed by punishment, again provides the contrast. The relationship between God and humankind has moved from one of enmity to one of dependence of the latter upon the former's superior knowledge of good and evil.

The notion of the Fall of Man is erroneous when applied to the paradise story. More appropriate is the notion of the rise of humanity, but even this idea has to be qualified. The first offence in mythical history is Eve's deed, but hers is not wrongful rebellion, as has been so uncritically assumed by interpreters. Her disobedience is justified and is akin to that form of commendable action we term civil disobedience. The first wrongful human action is Cain's murder. That it was chosen as the first is not surprising. It is dramatic: a murder. It is realistic: it occurs within a family. It is very human: the passions of envy and anger are displayed.

Notes

1. York ('The Maturation Theme in the Adam and Eve Story', unpublished manuscript) is correct too in pointing out that the idea of a fall already begins to emerge in such early works of postbiblical Judaism as Wis. Sol. 10.1, 2; Ben Sira 15.11-20; 2 Esd. 3.4-7. See also his masterly piece, 'Adam in Literature', in *The Dictionary of Biblical Tradition in English Literature* (Ottawa: University of Ottawa Press, forthcoming). On the story as more the rise of humanity than a fall, see E. Fromm, *You Shall Be as Gods: A Radical Interpretation of the Old Testament and its Tradition* (London: Jonathan Cape, 1967), pp. 23-24, 70-71; D. Daube, *Civil Disobedience in Antiquity* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1972), pp. 60-62. An ancient precedent for this view is found among some of the Gnostics; see E.H. Pagels, *Adam, Eve, and the Serpent* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1988), pp. xxiv, 68.

2. On a major aspect of this transformation, see M. Bal, 'Sexuality, Sin and Sorrow: The Emergence of the Female Character (A Reading of Genesis 1–3)', *Poetics Today* 6 (1985), pp. 21-42.

3. *Civil Disobedience*, p. 60.

4. The biblical development is in many ways similar to the Greek: 'While superior power was to the Greeks always a characteristic of the gods in relation to men, superior goodness was attributed to them only at a later stage and as an article of faith, often running counter to what seemed to be the facts of daily experience' (J.W. Jones, *Law and Legal Theory of the Greeks* [Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1956], p. 248).

5. On what underlies this perception, see my comments in *Law and Narrative in the Bible* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1985), p. 321.

6. The puzzling account of how Adam first tried to find a suitable companion among the creatures may be drawing attention to his animal-like existence at this

stage. R. Graves and R. Patai go further: bestiality may be implied (*Hebrew Myths: The Book of Genesis* [London: Cassell, 1964], p. 67).

7. 'It [the serpent] does not try to illumine our affairs by transposing them into affairs of animals, plants or objects' (D. Daube, *Ancient Hebrew Fables* [Oxford: Postgraduate Centre for Hebrew Studies, 1973], p. 21).

8. On the association of the serpent with life in ancient Near Eastern sources, see K.R. Joines, 'The Serpent in Gen. 3', *ZAW* 87 (1975), pp. 1-3.

9. Why, we might ask, must the serpent be given a role at all? To depict the mystery of human curiosity whose origin is beyond comprehension. A parallel to the use of an animate being to convey a human trait is probably to be found in Nathan's parable in 2 Sam. 12.1-6. The traveller whose appetite must be satisfied may well stand for David's wandering desire. That the serpent is specifically chosen probably reflects the use of reversal in the construction of the story—the serpent, perceived as the lowest of creatures, is chosen to depict the creature originally enjoying a status halfway between God and humankind—rather than perhaps any influence from Near Eastern mythology.

10. A draft of this essay was originally read at a conference on Adam and Eve in Art, Literature, and Religion at the University of Lancaster, England, in January, 1986. In his paper at the conference, Jonathan Magonet played down the sexual element in the reference to Adam and Eve's nakedness (see Chapter 2, above). On the basis of the use of the term 'nakedness' in other Old Testament passages he argued that defencelessness was the more prominent notion. But even in passages where this meaning is indeed primary, we have to remind ourselves that the human emotion of shame is ultimately grounded in the feelings of vulnerability to outsiders that human beings experience when engaged in intercourse. On fear as a component of shame (compare, for example, the verb 'to shy away' with the adjective 'shy'), see D. Daube's comments, 'The Culture of Deuteronomy', *Orita* 3 (1969), pp. 27-52.

11. Consider, for example, the story about Abigail and her husband Nabal ('And she was a woman of good understanding'; 'For as his name is, so is he'; 'Nabal is his name, and folly is with him': 1 Sam. 25.3, 25). For different examples of the phenomenon in question, see W. Brueggemann, 'Life and Death in Tenth-Century Israel', *JAAR* 40 (1972), pp. 96-109; R.A. Carlson, *David, the Chosen King* (trans. E.J. Sharpe and S. Rudman; Stockholm: Amqvist & Wiksell, 1964); C.M. Carmichael, 'A Time for War and a Time for Peace: The Influence of the Distinction upon Some Legal and Literary Material', in *Studies in Jewish Legal History in Honour of David Daube* (ed. B.S. Jackson; London: Jewish Chronicle Publications, 1974), pp. 50-63; S. Talmon, '"Wisdom" in the Book of Esther', *VT* 13 (1963), pp. 419-55.

12. See J.M. Thompson, *The Form and Function of Proverbs in Ancient Israel* (The Hague: Mouton, 1974), pp. 69, 70, 87, 124. In both Hellenistic philosophical circles and in rabbinic circles the interest in such contradictory statements, antinomy, became much developed.

13. See A.M. Dubarle, *Les sages d'Israël* (Paris: Cerf, 1946), pp. 7-24.

14. On these verses as embodying reflection upon the mystery of sexuality, see W. McKane, *Proverbs* (London: SCM Press, 1970), p. 658.

15. See R.N. Whybray, *Wisdom in Proverbs* (London: SCM Press, 1965), pp. 12, 13, 77-79, 89.

16. Shame, being both positive and negative in its effects, is, in a way, the unarticulated knowledge of good and evil.

17. Thompson, *Form and Function*, pp. 87, 119-30.

18. See the analysis of D. Daube, *Studies in Biblical Law* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1947), pp. 190-200; also the very similar analysis of R. Alter, *The Art of Biblical Narrative* (London: Allen & Unwin, 1981), pp. 42-45.

19. On the difficulties of interpretation of Prov. 30.1-4, see McKane, *Proverbs*, pp. 643-47.

20. McKane (*Proverbs*, p. 658) suggests that in Prov. 30.19 the movement of the serpent, like that of the ship and the eagle, is intended to convey the mystery of sexual attraction.

21. *Civil Disobedience*, p. 61.

22. In a letter to me of 26 March 1985, David Daube disagreed with my observation that an earlier form of the plaint of Ecclesiastes is an integral part of the paradise story:

> As for the extremely interesting question you raise—I think that for the authors of the Eden and Prometheus myths civilisation was a sheer triumph. Heaven's punishment sprang from fear, jealousy, etc. The plaint of Ecclesiastes represents a later stage when the blessing turns out less than perfect or even something of a curse. This development of course recurs again and again. The machine of psychoanalysis was greeted as saviour to begin with, but in course of time its drawbacks were recognized and by now many wonder whether we would not be better off without it. The God of Genesis, if we want a comparison, would be like the industrialized nation that does not want an unindustrialized, cheap provider of materials to compete.

23. For example, whence comes wisdom—Job 28, especially vv. 11, 12.

24. Cf. Eccl. 12.7, which H.L. Ginsberg says is clearly influenced by Gen. 2 and 3 ('The Structure and Contents of the Book of Koheleth', in *Wisdom in Israel and in the Ancient Near East* [Festschrift H.H. Rowley; ed. M. Noth and D. Winton Thomas; VTSup, 3; Leiden: Brill, 1955], p. 149). Ginsberg may be mistaking influence for analogy.

25. Contrast, not complementarity, mainly underlies the juxtaposition of the two stories of creation in Gen. 1–3. The manifest contradictions between part of them (e.g. vegetation precedes humankind in one, but comes after in the other) alone indicate the likelihood of a conscious awareness of contrast on the part of the author of the later story, or of a redactor. See my comments in *The Decalogues and the Laws of the Book of the Covenant* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1991), ch. 2. The role of contrast in the arrangement of material throughout the book of Genesis also comes from wisdom circles.

26. 'On that day'—so the meaning is not, as pious exegetes like to think, that in some distant future they will die, as all human beings die.

27. On the disobedience of the divine command as justified in a manner comparable to civil disobedience, see Daube, *Civil Disobedience*, p. 60.

28. Note, however, that in each instance there is no good reason provided why all of the food should not be eaten.

29. On sacrifice as necessary for the maintenance of life, see J. Pedersen, *Israel, its Life and Culture*, III, IV (London: Oxford University Press, 2nd edn, 1959), pp. 299, 322-23.

30. It is the failure to observe the larger context of meaning about the role of discrimination that has led so many interpreters to wrestle with the significance of the deity's action and his words of counsel. There are, admittedly, problems in the text about these words, but a philological approach that is cut loose from the larger context is valueless. In any event, the problems in the text are not nearly as difficult as are made out.

31. Cf. Job 32.8, 'But there is a spirit in man: and the inspiration of the Almighty giveth them understanding'.

32. Two terms for the keeper of animals, *šomer* and *ro'eh*, are used (Gen 4.2, 9).

33. The issue of distinguishing between killing an animal and killing a man is an important one in Gen. 9.3, 6. See Carmichael, 'A Time for War', pp. 419-55.

34. For example, the distinction between an animal and a vegetable does not imply any distinction in status between one man who deals with animals and another who deals in vegetables.

35. That God should look with favour upon one sacrifice and not upon the other is as inexplicable as the human desire for the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil. The view that God had cursed the ground and consequently could not accept a vegetable offering is not to be inferred.

36. Compare the distinction made between an offence (seduction) in open country and the same offence within a city: help is available in the city, but not in the country (Deut. 23.23-27). On the major puzzle why the vagrant Cain should end up settling in a city of his own, see the solution of D. Daube, 'Two Jewish Prayers', *Rechtshistorisches Journal* 6 (1987), pp. 188-94.

THE IMAGE OF GOD, THE WISDOM OF SERPENTS AND THE KNOWLEDGE OF GOOD AND EVIL*

John F.A. Sawyer

I

I want to suggest that the Garden of Eden story in Genesis 2–3 is an expansion of the 'image of God' story in ch. 1. What is said in a few verses about human beings and their resemblance to God in ch. 1 is spelt out at some length in the story of Adam and Eve in chs. 2–3. The two stories say the same things about human nature, the one in rather stark theological language, the other more in the style of a myth or fable. To understand the one we must refer to the other.

This rather obvious point about one of the world's best-known literary masterpieces has been obscured in modern times by the exigencies of source criticism. Two centuries ago a 'no-go area' was established, for impeccable source-critical reasons, half-way through v. 4 in ch. 2, and thereafter the 'image of God' passage had to be discussed without reference to the Garden of Eden story, and vice versa. The author of 1.1–2.4a wrote what he wrote without any knowledge of 2.4b–3.24, and vice versa. Without for a moment questioning the truth of the critics' claim that a new source begins in 2.4b, I want to give three powerful reasons for the view that we are nevertheless intended—and have been since the text began—to read Genesis 1–3 as a continuous narrative, in which the second story is no more and no less than an expansion of the first.

In the first place, although 2.4a is written in the same style as the preceding verses, it is in fact a kind of title or introductory formula for what follows, as in 5.1 and elsewhere. Most commentators take it this way, and most modern English versions too (the New English

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Bible being a conspicuous exception). Yet the exegetical significance of this fact seems to have been overlooked. It means that the author of ch. 1 intended the Garden of Eden story to be read along with the first story, since he wrote the title to it himself.

Secondly, the overlap in subject matter is far more substantial than is often admitted between the events on the sixth day according to ch. 1 and the events in the Garden of Eden according to chs. 2–3. 'Let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air and the cattle. . . ' in ch. 1 corresponds to Adam naming the animals in ch. 2. 'I have given you plants and fruit to eat. . . ' in ch. 1 is taken up in ch. 2 as well: 'God said, You may freely eat of every tree in the garden except the tree of knowledge. . . ' The creation of Adam in ch. 1 is elaborated in ch. 2 in the story of how God formed him from the dust and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, 'and man became a living being'. 'Male and female he created them' is developed in all kinds of ways in the story of Adam and Eve.

Most significant of all, and rarely if ever noticed, is the climax of the Garden of Eden story at the end of ch. 3: 'Behold, man has become like one of us, knowing good and evil' (3.22). This and the 'image of God' passage in ch. 1 are the only two passages in the Pentateuch where God speaks in the first person plural: 'Let us make man in our image. . . ' beside 'man has become like one of us'. These are also the two main places where the question of resemblance between man and God is discussed. The serpent uses a similar expression earlier in the story: 'you will become like God (or gods), knowing good and evil', and the 'image of God' language occurs again in chs. 5 and 9. But it surely cannot be a coincidence that the beginning and end of the Genesis account of the creation of Adam focus on this matter of resemblance: 'in our image' at the beginning and 'like one of us' at the end.

Finally, any idea that the image of God belongs to the first story only is ruled out by the fact that the expression appears again in ch. 5 and ch. 9. Men and women are still in the image of God after they have been expelled from the Garden of Eden. In view of what has been said already about the overlap in structure and content between ch. 1 and chs. 2–3, we are surely intended to make a connection between the discussion of what Adam is like in the Garden of Eden story and the 'image of God' idea in the other chapters.

In a paper on the meaning of *be-tselem elohim*, 'in the image of God', published in 1974, I argued that the phrase refers to some undefined resemblance or resemblances between humanity and God (or the angels). It is *prima facie* unlikely that the term is used in this context in the sense of '(graven) image', referring to physical resemblance between man and God, as many have argued, especially when we consider that both male and female are created in the image of God (1.27). It is much more likely that the term *tselem* is used here in its older sense of 'shadow, dream', as in two psalms on the subject of human nature (Ps. 39.6; 73.20), and refers to some more abstract resemblance. The term *demut*, 'likeness', in Gen. 1.26 appears to confirm this, as well as the centuries of exegetical tradition, both Jewish and Christian, which have sought an abstract explanation rather than a concrete or physical one. What this resemblance is, and how it came about that Adam became 'like one of us knowing good and evil', is the plot of the Garden of Eden story. The recurrence of the 'image of God' motif after the story proves that the two stories are not intended to be understood as sequential, the creation of Adam followed by his 'Fall', as is often supposed, but in parallel, the one elaborating and explaining the other. The 'image of God' story in ch. 1 is complete in itself, telling how human beings were created, male and female, with some divine resemblance in them. Chapters 2–3 tell the same story in much greater detail, explaining how it came about that a man made out of the dust of the earth came to resemble God.

II

This brings us to the 'wisdom of serpents', since it was thanks to the serpent that Adam and Eve came to resemble God, 'knowing good and evil' (3.22). Why did our author choose a serpent as the catalyst? In the first place, we must understand that this serpent (Heb. *nahash*) is not one of the mythical monsters mentioned elsewhere in the Bible. The term is applied to Leviathan in one passage (Isa. 27.1), and there is a *nahash* at the bottom of the sea that bites the wicked according to another (Amos 9.3). But in this context there is no question of this. The serpent here is one of the 'beasts of the field', a common or garden animal, like the fox and the crow, the ant and the grasshopper, the hare and the tortoise and all the other ordinary animals that appear in Aesop's fables. Such animals appear in the biblical Wisdom literature too, not in fables, but in proverbs such as 'Go to the ant, you sluggard; consider her ways and be wise' (Prov. 6.6; cf. 30.24-31).

For the same reason I think we must rule out any idea of magic here. There are the stories of the bronze serpent in the wilderness that could cure snake-bite (Num. 21), and Moses' miraculous staff that changed into a snake at the court of Pharaoh (Exod. 4.3; 7.15). But the serpent in the Garden of Eden shows no signs of having any miraculous or magical powers of that kind. It is surely in proverbs and fables that we must expect to find the significance of the snake in Genesis 3.

In biblical literature, serpents seem to have been proverbial for their wisdom. Best known is Jesus' advice to his disciples about to go out into the world: 'Be wise as serpents' (Mt. 10.16). There is another example in Proverbs:

> Three things are too wonderful for me;
> four I do not understand:
> the way of an eagle in the sky,
> the way of a serpent on the rock,
> the way of a ship on the high seas,
> and the way of a man with a maiden (Prov. 30.18-19).

Serpents can move along the ground without legs, for one thing. What is more they can move very fast and are consequently very hard to catch. A regular epithet for *nahash* in Hebrew (and also in Ugaritic incidentally) is *bariah*, 'fleeing, elusive' (Isa. 27.1; Job 26.13). Jesus actually follows up his advice to be 'wise as serpents' with the words 'When they persecute you in one town, flee to the next' (v. 23). In other words, 'Don't get caught'. Another ancient Near Eastern example occurs in a royal inscription from twelfth-century BC Assyria: 'Like a viper among the rugged mountain ledges, I climbed triumphantly' (*Annals of Tiglath Pileser I* [c. 1115-1077], 2.76-77).

They can also slough off their outer skin, leaving a beautiful new skin underneath. Perhaps that is what Satan is referring to when he says to Job: 'Skin for skin: all that a man has he will give up for his life' (Job 2.4). Most obvious of all their powers is their venomous bite. For example,

> They have venom like the venom of a serpent,
> like the deaf adder that stops its ear,
> so that it does not hear the voice of the charmers. . .
> (Ps. 58.4-5; cf. 10.4; Prov. 23.22; Jer. 8.17; Amos 5.19; 9.3).

With such skills and powers, the serpent is, of all the beasts of the field, the best equipped to survive. This brings us to the meaning of the word translated 'subtle, cunning' in Gen. 3.1.

The word (*arum*) occurs quite regularly in the Wisdom literature. It refers to something that is respected and advocated in some contexts, where it is translated 'prudent', but feared and condemned in others. On the one hand we have such texts as the following:

> The simple believes everything, the prudent (*arum*) looks where he is going (Prov. 14.15; cf. 12.16, 23; 13.16; 14.8, 18; 22.3; 27.12).

On the other hand Job 5.12-13 reads:

> God frustrates the devices of the crafty so that their hands achieve no success. He takes the wise in their own craftiness, and the schemes of the wily are brought to a quick end.

In some contexts the same word is translated 'treacherously' (e.g. Exod. 21.14) or 'with cunning' (e.g. Josh. 9.4). In other words, the wisdom of serpents represents the power to succeed, the ability to survive, resourcefulness, shrewdness, not of itself good or bad. This is the wisdom that leads to life; 'Come to me', says Wisdom in Proverbs 8 and 9, 'and I will give you life'. This is the Wisdom that holds in her right hand 'Life, and in her left hand riches and honour' (Prov. 3.16). This is also the wisdom that is condemned by the prophets: for example, 'Woe to those who are wise in their own eyes, and shrewd in their own sight!' (Isa. 5.21).

It is this powerful commodity, necessary for survival in a hard world, that the serpent introduces into the Garden of Eden. Without it we would be defenceless, vulnerable, naked. It is the agent whereby Adam and Eve were transformed from mere 'living beings' (Gen. 2.7) into creatures 'in the image of God. . . like one of us, knowing good and evil' (3.22). To be truly human they had to eat of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil, and it was the serpent, which of all the beasts of the field comes closest to man in its resourcefulness and its ability to survive, that enabled them to do this. The dangers inherent in the serpent's wisdom appear in the story as well: it leads to suffering and exile, and like those who are 'wise in their own eyes', it is thrown down from its pedestal into the dust: 'Upon your belly shall you go and dust shall you eat all the days of your life' (Gen. 3.14).

III

We come now to 'the knowledge of good and evil'. First, we must remember that the phrase 'good and evil', in this context, is unlikely to refer to 'what is right and what is wrong'. It may include that, but surely it embraces much more: success and failure, joy and sadness, victory and defeat, indeed the whole vast range of human experience. It is in its sheer complexity that human nature resembles God's.

Then there is an interesting word-play at the beginning of ch. 3, which gives us another clue to what 'the image of God' in human nature refers to. The word for 'wise' at the beginning of ch. 3 is almost identical in sound and spelling to the word for 'naked' at the end of ch. 2. The contrast could not be more obvious between Adam and Eve without the 'knowledge of good and evil'—defenceless, naive, vulnerable, naked—and Adam and Eve after they had eaten from the Tree of Knowledge—self-conscious, complex, inventive, resourceful, shrewd. It is significant that it is the serpent that formulates the first question, 'Did God say. . .?' (3.1). Before that there were only statements and commands. Only after they had eaten from the tree were their eyes opened: before that there were things they had not even thought about. Now they were like God, knowing good and evil, aware of themselves, aware of their nakedness and their vulnerability, and aware of the world in which they lived. They were also able to take the initiative for the first time, and to begin to learn how to cope with reality. They discovered they could do things for themselves, such as making clothes (3.7). Before the serpent enabled them to acquire 'the knowledge of good and evil', they just did what they were told; now they have something of God's creative spirit in them.

Another point of resemblance between them and God is their new understanding of authority. The 'image of God' passage in ch. 1 put some emphasis on this: 'God said to them, "Fill the earth and subdue it, and have domination over the fish of the sea. . . " '(Gen. 1.28). This is explained further in ch. 2. Before the serpent appears on the scene, Adam assumes authority over the animals by innocently naming them; at the end of the story he is described as brutally stamping on the head of the serpent, in a violent picture later used to describe the messiah's victory over Satan. Before the serpent, men and women are equal, both made in the image of God, both naked and unashamed, both tempted to eat from the fruit of the Tree of Knowledge. In the end, women are condemned to submit to the authority of men. Before the serpent, man is depicted as gently tilling the soil in the Garden of Eden. In the end he is destined to have an almost intolerable struggle with nature: 'Cursed is the ground because of you, in toil shall you eat of it all the days of your life'.

This seems to explain the word 'subdue' in the 'image of God' passage earlier. The word *kabash* has horribly violent and aggressive overtones. It is used of ruthless conquest and subjugation, and must be intended here to suggest that it is going to be a hard struggle to 'fill the earth and subdue it'. There will be earthquakes and floods, drought and famine. Rocks will break your ploughs. Wild animals, insects and blight will destroy your harvest. The choice of this tough, aggressive word in Genesis 1 has often been commented on: the curse of Adam in ch. 3 explains it perfectly. He will have to fight to survive. The unique abilities of the serpent to survive, his elusiveness, his deadly bite and so on, give us some idea of the kind of skills Adam acquired when he ate from the Tree of Knowledge, and became 'like God, knowing good and evil'.

Such powerful wisdom does not, however, lead inevitably to life and success, as the serpent implies (Gen. 3.5), and the glib purveyors of wisdom claim (e.g. Job 5.17-27; Prov. 3.13-18). It can also lead to suffering and death. The fruit of the tree opened our eyes to evil as well as good, failure as well as success. The end of the story consists of a catalogue of such evils: humiliation, enmity between man and beast, the pain of childbearing, the subjection of one human being to another, the struggle with nature, expulsion from paradise, and death. It seems to me that even here we are to recognize a resemblance between God and man, another aspect of the complex image of God in man as outlined in ch. 1. Only a few chapters later, the story of the flood begins with the grief of God and his enmity towards his own creatures:

> And the Lord was sorry that he had made man upon the earth and it grieved him to his heart. . . and God determined to make an end of all flesh (Gen. 6.6-7).

The verb translated 'grieved' here is closely related to words for 'pain' and 'toil', as used in the curses in ch. 3. When we add two images of God from a text closely related to Genesis 1–3, we can get an idea of how rich this concept is:

> The Lord goes forth like a mighty man, like a man of war he stirs up his fury. . . now I will cry out like a woman in travail, I will gasp and pant. . . (Isa. 42.14).

This is a passage concerned with the nature of Israel's God, in contrast to the graven images worshipped by other people. And it nicely develops the point I want to make about the image of God in Genesis: a God who created men and women in his own image is a God capable of suffering as men and women suffer. This seems to be what the

Garden of Eden story is saying: the serpent's wisdom brought power into creation, but with it came the inevitability of suffering. In this respect, too, we are 'like God, knowing good and evil'.

In another respect Adam and Eve are in the image of God. Like God they know of the existence of a better world, and in particular about the possibility of immortality. Although driven out of paradise and barred from access to the Tree of Life, they know it exists. The vision of a world without suffering and without death is included in the knowledge of good and evil which distinguishes man from beast. It raises the question of whether someone one day might be able to get past those armed sentinels at the gates of paradise, and so provides a backcloth for much subsequent biblical prophecy. Towards the end of the book of Isaiah, for example (a book already referred to in connection with Genesis 1–3), the three curses are referred to. In the new age the serpent still eats dust, but the woman's labour pains are somewhat eased by the knowledge that they will always result in the birth of a perfect child, and the man's toil is relieved by the knowledge that it will always lead to success (Isa. 65.23-25). In the book of Revelation the Spirit says to the church in Ephesus: 'To him who conquers, I will grant access to the tree of life which is in the paradise of God' (Rev. 2.7). But quite apart from the surprisingly few explicit references to the Garden of Eden story, such as these two, the whole idea that, like God, we have knowledge of realities beyond our immediate experience, hopes, visions, ideals, is an integral part of biblical tradition, and surely another aspect of the image of God in man.

A final point of resemblance between man and God concerns our attitude to each other. If we bear in our nature something of God, then to attack or illtreat or exploit another human being is an assault on God. The image of God is cited in connection with the prohibition of murder in Genesis 9:

> If you shed human blood, by human hand shall your blood be shed; for God made human beings in his own image (Gen. 9.6).

A proverb makes the same point in a different way:

> If you mock the poor, you insult their creator (Prov. 17.5).

There is a beautiful example in a Jewish midrash too:

> R. Joshua ben Levi said: When a man goes on his road, a troop of angels proceeds in front of him and proclaims, 'Make way for the image of the Holy One, blessed be He' (*Deut. R. Re'eh* 4.4).

The notion that all men and women are like God implies that they demand our respect as God does. Reverence for human life and dignity, in other words, is thus given a unique sanction by the 'image of God' idea. What I want to say here is that the Garden of Eden story adds a further dimension to this view of humanity, by stating that even disobedient, humiliated, struggling men and women like Adam and Eve, refugees from paradise, are 'like God', and demand our reverence and respect as bearing in their nature the image of God.

IV

To conclude, I have argued that the image of God in men and women is to be explained by reference to resemblances between them spelled out in the Garden of Eden story, and summed up at the end in God's words: 'Man has become like one of us, knowing good and evil'. The phrase 'knowing good and evil' is the key, defined partly in terms of the wisdom of serpents (i.e. the ability to survive), and partly in terms of the wisdom of God which came from eating the forbidden fruit and which raises humankind above all the beasts of the field. The alternative is to treat the two stories as entirely independent, a view which is surely to be rejected as doing violence to the text as we read it, or to take the 'image of God' passage with ch. 2 only, as dealing with human nature before 'the Fall', so that ch. 3 introduces a new development. This again seems to be unjustified on two accounts. In the first place, the 'image of God' story reads like a complete narrative in its own right, and even includes the discordant, aggressive term *kabash*, 'subdue'. But secondly, human nature is still 'in the image of God' after 'the Fall'.

It may be said that the importance of sin is underplayed in the present interpretation. Certainly it was disobedience that led to the three curses and the expulsion of Adam and Eve from the Garden. But it still seems to me that the author places more emphasis on the result of the disobedience than on the sin itself, upon how things are rather than on what produced them, upon the complexity of human nature and its resemblance to God than on the myth of Adam and Eve and the serpent. 'Good and evil' surely includes far more in this story than right and wrong. Neither is it satisfactory to interpret 'the knowledge of good and evil' as sexual awareness as many have argued. It must include 'good and evil' in their widest biblical sense of happiness and catastrophe, success and failure, life and death, and carries with it the hopes and frustrations that underlie much of biblical tradition. In the words of Ecclesiastes,

> God has put eternity into man's mind, yet so that he cannot find out what God has done from the beginning to the end. . . whatever God does endures forever. . . God made it so in order that men should fear before him (Eccl. 3.11-12).

Or in the words of Psalm 8, so often quoted in connection with the 'image of God' passage, 'He has made us a little less than angels': 'less' in that we are mortal and not allowed to eat from the Tree of Life, but only 'a little less' in that we have become like one of them 'knowing good and evil'.

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FROM FIG LEAVES TO FINGERNAILS: SOME NOTES ON THE GARMENTS OF ADAM AND EVE IN THE HEBREW BIBLE AND SELECT EARLY POSTBIBLICAL JEWISH WRITINGS

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In this paper an attempt will be made to outline and comment upon some aspects of the significance of the garments of Adam and Eve in the Hebrew Bible and certain postbiblical Jewish writings. Attention will largely be focused upon early Jewish traditions about the nature of the first couple's attire. No attempt will be made to comment upon either the whole complex of early Jewish interpretations of the key text (Gen. 2.25; 3.7; and 3.21) or upon the rich variety of themes and motifs associated therewith in Christian, Gnostic, Hermetic, Manichaean, Mandaean and Islamic sources.

1. *The Biblical Texts*

Modern biblical scholars have, on the whole, neglected the importance and interrelationships of Gen. 2.25, 3.7 and 3.21 for the understanding of the opening chapters of Genesis. Considerable attention has been paid, for example, to the motif of the 'serpent' and to the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil but the 'nakedness' and 'garment' motifs usually receive disappointing or cursory treatment. When Gen. 2.25, 3.7 and 3.21 are read in sequence, they indicate a threefold transition in the status or condition of the first couple of central importance, that is, (1) an initial nakedness and unashamedness, to (2) being clothed in fig-leaf 'aprons', and then (3) being clothed in 'coats of skins'. That the importance of these verses in their Genesis context has been largely unrecognized is doubtless in large measure due to Genesis 2–3 having been much written about by scholars consciously or unconsciously predisposed to read them in Christian terms; the 'nakedness' and 'garment' motifs being relatively unimportant in the history of Christian biblical exegesis and theology. If, from the modern scholarly standpoint, it is right to pay more attention to the exegetical implications of the abovementioned texts in their narrative setting, the case cannot here be argued in detail. It must suffice to outline my own conclusion as to the general significance of Gen. 2.25, 3.7 and 3.21 without registering the plethora of scholarly opinions about the Genesis story of the first couple.

Genesis 2.25

> And the man and his wife were both naked (ערומים) and they were not ashamed (יתבששו).

In this verse we are informed about the first couple's initial, Edenic state: their 'nakedness' and 'unashamedness'. The implication appears to be that human relationships were originally stable, dignified and innocent. Without mundane wealth or the status that comes from initiation into civilized ways, humankind existed in a world untroubled by fear, hatred or scorn, in a harmonious and obedient condition. With Gen. 2.25 the scene is set for a mythic presentation of the emergence of sophisticated or civilized man who stands, in view of his limitations, in need of God's guidance and blessings.

It is unlikely that Gen. 2.25 is to be understood in terms of the narrative of the first couple being directly indicative of the emergence of human sexuality. Since 'nakedness' in the Hebrew Bible usually refers to the loss of human and social dignity the primordial 'nakedness' and 'unashamedness' most probably indicates that human relationships were originally characterized by innocence and mutual trust and respect before God.

Genesis 3.7

> And the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they were naked (עירמם) and they sewed fig leaves (תאנה) together and made themselves aprons (חגרת).

Gen 2.25 clearly points forward to Gen. 3.1-2, and particularly to Gen. 3.7 which describes the consequences of the first couple's eating of the fruit of the forbidden tree. Since the forbidden tree most probably symbolizes the whole range (טוב ורע, Gen. 2.17; cf. 3.22) of human wisdom/experiences potentially contrary to the divine purpose (cf. Gen. 2.16), the first couple's eating of the fruit of this tree may be taken to indicate their turning away from God in order to attain a limited human sophistication (cf. Gen. 3.7a)—which meant the loss of the primordial innocent dignity. Human wisdom outside of obedience to God, it may be gathered, disturbs peaceful human relations and the divine–human relationship. Even when initiated into the ways of the world, humankind ever stands in need of God. This need is underlined by the folly of the first couple's act of making fig-leaf 'aprons' (Gen. 3.7b).

It is important for the understanding of Genesis 2–3 to note that the very first act of the first couple after eating of the fruit of the forbidden tree was the making of fig-leaf 'aprons'. Modern commentators are generally disappointing in explaining the significance of this act—if indeed, it is commented on at all. The view that the first couple made specifically fig-leaf 'aprons' because of the leaves of the fig tree, being the largest on any Palestinian tree, were most suitable for sewing together and making 'aprons', is not very convincing. Also inadequate is the view that the first couple made fig-leaf 'aprons' because the forbidden tree itself, allegedly being a fig tree, provided them with the necessary material. Rather, it seems to me, the first couple's act of making fig-leaf 'aprons' is an indication of the fact that, despite their becoming sophisticated or wise as a result of eating of the fruit of the forbidden tree, they were still so foolish as to imagine that they could adequately cover their 'nakedness'. Gen. 3.7b points to the folly of the first couple and also, perhaps, in terms of the sexually suggestive associations of the fig tree, to the dangers of participation in fertility cults and rites. Humanity, we learn, despite attaining a certain level of sophistication, remains in need of the divine guidance. The folly of the first couple's act of making fig-leaf 'aprons' is to be contrasted with the wisdom of God's making of the 'coats of skins' (Gen. 3.21).

Genesis 3.21

> And the Lord God made for the man and for his wife coats of skins (כתנותעור) and he clothed them.

Commentators on Genesis 2–3 sometimes maintain that Gen. 3.7b stands in some 'tension' with Gen. 3.21; the first couple having made fig-leaf 'aprons' before God makes the 'coats of skins'. If this alleged 'tension' is not to be explained on the basis of a source-critical theory it may highlight the importance of the contrast between the foolish act implied at Gen. 3.7b and the divine wisdom indicated in Gen. 3.21.

The final form of Genesis 2–3 at least invites some explanation of this 'tension'. As much uncertainty surrounds the exact meaning of words in the Hebrew Bible indicative of items of clothing, it is difficult to tell whether 'aprons' (חגרת, Gen. 3.7; alternatively, 'loincloths', 'girdles' or 'sashes'?) signifies a less adequate means of attire than is implied by 'coats' (כתנות, Gen. 3.21; alternatively, 'tunics', 'robes', or 'shirts'?), although this is possible. The fact, however, that the 'aprons' were made of fig leaves and the 'coats' of animal skins may indeed highlight the folly of the first couple as compared with the superior wisdom of God. Despite their acquisition of human wisdom, the first couple lacked even the knowledge of how to clothe themselves adequately. Their fig-leaf 'aprons' served no real purpose. In their 'shame' the first couple still found it necessary to hide from God (Gen. 3.8).

God's making of the 'coats of skins' may be viewed, then, as an expression of his superior wisdom, his awareness of the real needs of his creatures in view of the imminent expulsion from the Garden. The first couple's limited sophistication will not adequately fit them for mundane post-Edenic existence, although God accepts humankind as it is and caters for its real needs.

Several modern commentators have understood Gen. 3.21 on these lines. Attempts to set forth the significance of this and the other verses discussed above have, however, often been obscured by obviously eisegetical statements informed by Christian teaching. Genesis 2–3 is not, it seems to me, primarily about 'sin, 'guilt' or 'emergent sexuality' in terms of a 'fall' but has to do with the emergence of human wisdom potentially capable of upsetting the God–humanity relationship. The taking into account of Gen. 2.25, 3.7 and 3.21 tends to support this level of interpretation.

Finally in this connection it should be noted that it has been popular to see in Gen. 3.21 and sometimes also Gen. 3.7 an aetiological note on the origin of human clothing. Skinner for example, in the ICC *Commentary on Genesis*, wrote (of Gen. 3.21), 'Another detached notice on the origin of clothing'. Although the author(s) of Genesis 2–3 may have been heir to popular aetiological traditions, Gen. 3.7 and 3.21 have a more profound contextual significance in terms of human folly and the divine wisdom and providence.

2. *Early Jewish Adam Speculation and the Garments of Adam and Eve*

While references to the first couple are few in the Hebrew Bible outside Genesis, postbiblical Jewish literatures contain a great deal of Adam speculation. In Genesis, Ezekiel 28 and Psalm 8, Adam receives a measure of glorification, but his exaltation is much more marked in a wide range of early Jewish writings. Eve, also, may play a role quite different from that of the bearer of sin and death. The sources suggest that by about the first century CE, Adam came, in certain circles, to be seen as a royal, kingly, angelic or divine figure who manifested something of the divine 'glory' (כבוד, δόξα) and who exercised primordial priestly functions.

Adam's being pictured, in the probably Maccabaean and so-called 'Second Dream-Vision of Enoch' (*1 En.* 85–90) as a 'white bull [cow]'; his initial angelic, glorious and royal status in the longer recension of *2 Enoch* ('J', 30.11–12); and the striking references to his radiant 'glory' (δόξα) in both the long and short recensions of the *Testament of Abraham* ('A' and 'B'; 1st-2nd cent. CE) are important testimonies to the early exaltation of the first man. The two early and related 'Adam Books', the *Life of Adam and Eve* and the (mistitled) *Apocalypse of Moses*—possibly two versions of a single original written (in Hebrew, Aramaic or Greek?) between c. 20 BCE and 70 CE (?)—also make reference to the initial 'glory' of the first couple and contain passages which indicate that the righteous (symbolized by Adam) will eventually inherit the splendid 'glory' of the first man. In the Greek *Apocalypse of Baruch* (*3 Baruch*; 1st-3rd cent. CE?), it is presupposed that Adam possessed an initial 'glory'; he is said to have been divested of the 'glory of God' (in the form of a garment?) after having partaken of the forbidden vine tree planted by the demoniac Samuel (= Samael; Slavonic has Satanael; see *3 Bar.* 4.16).

The motif of the divine 'glory'/'honour' (כבוד) is of considerable importance in the theology of the Qumran Scrolls. The *Damascus Document*, *Community Rule* and one of the Qumran hymns make explicit reference to the 'glory of Adam' (כבודאדם) which the probably Essene 'sons of Zadok' hoped to inherit in eschatological times (see CD 3.20; 1QS 4.23; 1QH 17.5; cf., also, 1QS 4.16, 24; 4Q171 3.1-2). It is a commonly held scholarly viewpoint that the Qumran Jews expected to receive (or had already in a certain measure proleptically received) a share of the 'glory' (כבוד) lost (?) by Adam. Qumran eschatological expectations were influenced by the belief that primordial conditions would be renewed at the eschaton, a notion that has biblical roots.

The early exaltation of Adam and the motif of his initial 'glory' appears to be intimately connected with the various postbiblical references to his (and sometimes Eve's) 'garments of glory' which pious Jews hoped to receive at the eschaton. Adam's allegedly angelic and priestly status is also closely connected with this complex of ideas.

a. *Adam's Primordial Priesthood and his Garments*

The exaltation of Adam as a priestly figure has contributed to the picture of his being clad in special radiant or glorious garments. A number of passages within the pseudepigraphical corpus and in early rabbinic midrashim speak of the first man as exercising priestly functions. Early sources suggest that the concept of the priesthood of Adam played a greater role in early postbiblical Judaism than extant literatures indicate.

Of interest in the attempt to trace the origins of the notion of Adam's primordial priesthood and glorious garments are Ezek. 28.13 (LXX) and Ben Sira 49.16; 50.1ff. Ezek. 28.11-12 is the only text in the Hebrew Bible that reflects royal ideology, first-man mythology and which came to be understood in terms of garment imagery. At Ezek. 28.13 (MT) we read, in the course of a lament over the hybris of the Tyrian king: 'You were in Eden the garden of God; every precious stone was your covering' (RSV; מסכחם . . . כל־אדם יקרה). Although it is not certain that these words originally referred to a jewelled garment worn by an Edenic figure, both the LXX and the Ezekiel Targum (possibly containing tannaitic traditions) are on these lines. The LXX (Greek) version transforms the nine precious stones listed in the Hebrew (MT) into the twelve set on the high-priestly breastplate according to Exod. 28.10-11 (and Exod. 39.10-11). This interpretative version of Ezek. 28.13 is certainly suggestive in terms of the roots of the notion of Adam's priesthood and 'glorious garments'. The Ezekiel Targum lists nine precious stones (like the Hebrew) but has it that they were set upon a garment: 'every precious stone was set upon your garment' (כל אבנין טבן מסדר על לבישׁך). In rabbinic literature, furthermore, Ezek. 28.12-13 is related to the idea of Adam's wisdom and to the first couple's clothing: the jewels formed a kind of glorious bridal canopy which contributed to the splendour of Eve's bridal attire (see *Gen. R.* 18.1; *Eccl. R.* 7.3; *Lev. R.* 20.2; etc.).

The book of Ben Sira (Ecclesiasticus; c. 180 BCE) makes reference at 49.16 to the 'glorious beauty of Adam' (Heb. תפארת). Immediately following this text is a fairly lengthy glorification of the High Priest, Simon son of Onias (50.1ff.). Ben Sira very probably meant to exalt Simon the High Priest in the light of Adam's primordial priesthood and in view, perhaps, of his own priestly lineage and 'proto-Sadducaean' orientation. It is significant that at Ben Sira 50.11, Simon's glorious high-priestly garments are mentioned: 'When he put on his gorgeous vestments, robed himself in perfect splendour, he added lustre to the court of the sanctuary'. Like Adam as pictured in various postbiblical literatures, Simon wears the robe of splendour. Worth noting in this connection also is the fact that the Hebrew word expressive of Adam's 'glorious beauty' (תפארת at Ben Sira 49.16b) is used of the Aaronic high-priestly garments at Exod. 28.2, 40 (along also with the word 'glory' [כבוד]). S. Brock, in a note to a consideration of the origin and significance of the 'robe of honour/glory' in early Syriac literature, writes: 'In Ben Sira 50.11 the "robe of glory" is the priestly robe of Aaron and Simon; the terminology will be derived from Adam's priesthood'.

Various traditions found in the pseudepigraphical writings and in rabbinic literature are also of interest in connection with Adam's primordial priesthood and glorious garments. *Jubilees* 3, for example, has it on the basis of Gen. 3.21 that Adam only made sacrifices to God after he had 'covered his shame'. The mention of the first couple's 'garments of honour/glory' (לבושׁין דסקר) in the Targums to Gen. 3.21 (*Targ. Onq*; 1TJ.; 2TJ.; *Targ. Neof.*) may presuppose the legend that Adam's garments were glorious priestly garments which were handed down. Adam's having handed down his priestly garments is explicitly mentioned in rabbinic midrashim (see *Num. R.* 4.8.; *M. Tanḥ.* on Gen. 3.21; etc.) and possibly alluded to in the (so-called) *Apocalypse of Moses* (1.3) where Cain is named *Adiaphotos* (MS 'D'), 'one devoid of light' (?) and Abel *Amilabes* (MSS 'A' and 'D') which may be a garbled transliteration of the Hebrew for 'he who dons the garment [of light]' (מעיל לבשׁ or the like).

There are then, to sum up, passages in postbiblical Jewish literatures that identify Adam's garments as priestly or high-priestly garments of a splendid or glorious nature.

b. *Angelology and the Garments*

Although there are few passages in postbiblical Jewish writings that explicitly identify Adam's garments as angelic robes, there are a good many texts that speak of angelic beings—as well as certain biblical worthies—as being clothed in radiant or white robes. There are likewise texts in which it is predicted that the righteous will come to be clothed in radiant garments or be transformed into the likeness of the angels. Particularly interesting in connection with the question of early notions about the garments of Adam are passages in the Qumran *Manual of Discipline* (1QS) and the Syriac *Apocalypse of Baruch* (2 *Baruch*; early 2nd cent. CE ?).

In that part of the *Manual of Discipline* in the 'glory of Adam' (כבוד אדם) is mentioned (4.23) it is promised that the righteous who walk in the 'true spirit' will, at the eschatological visitation, partake (among other things) of 'a crown of glory (כליל חבוד) and a garment of majesty (מדת הדר) in unending light (אור עומים)'. This passage may well reflect Qumran protology and its attendant Adam speculation in terms of the anticipated angelic status of the pious. 2 *Baruch* 51 describes the eschatological splendour of the righteous who have been justified in God's law, mentioning their celestial glory, splendour, light and beauty. They are to be transformed into radiant angelic beings.

The Rabbis were interested in the exalted Adam as a kind of portrait of the righteous and gave considerable importance to the correct estimation of his status; particularly since the first man had come to be so exalted in certain Jewish, Christian and Gnostic circles that biblical monotheism seemed to be endangered. Adam's likeness to the angels is not often spelt out in rabbinic literature. As far as I am aware only one obscure and possibly interpolated passage in *Genesis Rabbah* (21.5) likens Adam to an angelic being, Gabriel, in connection with his having special angelic-type garments which were part of his own being. This is not to say, however, that the motif of Adam's glorious garments is unrelated to the splendid robes of heavenly angels. Although Adam's glorious garments were very seldom directly identified as angelic robes, many texts indirectly suggest that this motif was originally intimately related to Adam's paradigmatic exaltation to the status of an angelic being with an Edenic glory in terms of early Jewish eschatological hopes.

In the light of the above it may be said that the motif of Adam's garment of glory mentioned in the Targums, rabbinic and other Jewish sources is very probably rooted in the notion of the primordial priesthood of the first man and in eschatologically oriented and angelologically informed views of his glorious status as a paradigm of the righteous in the world to come. By the first century CE, Adam was, in certain Jewish circles, regarded as an exalted priestly figure and one initially in an elevated angelic state. The Jewish yearning for immortality, partly born out of the Maccabaean crisis and related to the influence of Iranian/Zoroastrian and Hellenistic streams of thought, led to Adam's being viewed as one clothed in glorious priestly attire or in angelic garments of immortality. Whether or to what extent such texts as the *Descent of Ishtar* or Iranian and proto-Gnostic first-man mythology contributed to the Jewish motif of Adam's glorious garments is an issue which cannot be fully discussed here.

3. *The Garments of Adam and Eve in the Intertestamental Pseudepigraphical Writings*

Two of the intertestamental pseudepigraphical writings, the *Book of Jubilees* (100-150 BCE ?) and the *Apocalypse of Moses* (cf. above) contain passages of interest in connection with the matter of the garments of Adam and Eve.

The *Book of Jubilees* contains the earliest extant postbiblical midrashic treatment of the 'nakedness' and 'garment' motifs. According to *Jubilees* 3 an Edenic seven-year period of the 'nakedness and unashamedness' of the first couple came to an end when the serpent tempted Eve. Having eaten of the forbidden fruit, she 'covered her shame' before giving Adam to eat. On eating, Adam 'took fig leaves and sewed [them] together and made an apron for himself and covered his shame' (3.21.2; see Gen. 3.7). That Eve is said to have covered her shame before proferring the forbidden fruit to Adam hints at a reserved attitude towards nakedness which becomes explicit in the midrashic treatment of Gen. 3.21.

Jub. 3.23-24 follows the Hebrew test of Gen. 3.14-15 fairly closely. Gen. 3.21 is accurately reproduced (3.26a). We learn that Adam, now clothed in 'coats of skins', made an incense offering (cf. Exod. 30.34-35; etc.) with the 'rising of the sun' from the day when God 'covered his shame' (3.28). This, as already noted, is indicative of an early interest in Adam's primordial priesthood. According to Exod. 20.26 priests must not appear naked at the altar but be clothed, among other things, in 'coats' (כתנות; cf. כתנות עור, 'coats of skins', Gen. 3.21).

The consequences of the disobedience of the first couple are commented on in *Jub.* 3.28-29. All moving things were scattered over the earth 'unto the places which had been created for them'. The animals were deprived of their powers of speech and, according to *Jub.* 3.30, 'to Adam alone did he [God] give (the wherewithal) to cover his shame, of all the beasts and cattle'. God did not make 'coats of skins' (Gen. 3.21) for the animals. It is fitting that men cover their 'shame' but the case is different with respect to the animals whose 'shame' (private parts) is naturally exposed. This line of thought and the rationale behind it is partly unveiled in *Jub.* 3.31 where we read: 'On this account, it is prescribed on the heavenly tablets as touching all those who know the judgment of the law, that they should cover their shame, and not uncover themselves as the Gentiles uncover themselves'. Here we have a unique midrash on Gen. 3.21 in the form of a condemnation of Gentile nudity; in all likelihood a pious Jewish and anti-Hellenistic condemnation of the nudity accompanying Greek athletics. Jews who took part in Greek athletics (see 1 Macc. 1.10ff.) may have argued, in view of Adam's initial nakedness, that their nudity was nothing untoward. Alternatively, *Jub* 3.28ff. may have been intended to counter the various manifestations of sacral nudity that were common in the Graeco-Roman world. Being 'prudish in the highest degree', Jews did not generally share with their Hellenistic neighbours the notion of the natural beauty of the naked human body.

Apocalypse of Moses 15–30 is a lengthy narration by Eve of the story of the first couple (not paralleled in *LAE*). Reference is made to their loss of the Edenic 'glory' (δόξα). The fig-leaf garment episode is expanded upon, although there is no reference to God's making of the 'coats of skins' (Gen. 3.21).

According to *Apocalypse of Moses* 15–19, Eve, having been induced by the serpent to eat of the tree poisoned by Satan's wickedness, is divested of her 'righteousness' (δικαςοσύνη) or 'glory' (δόξα). Mention is made of the 'glory' (δόξα) in which she was clothed (*Apoc. Mos.* 20.2). The realization of 'nakedness' (Gen. 3.7) is interpreted in terms of the first couple's realization of their loss of the 'righteousness/glory' in which they had been clothed.

As soon as Eve realized her 'nakedness', she sought, in her own section of the Garden, leaves with which to cover her 'shame'. She quickly became aware that, as a result of her folly, all the Edenic trees save the fig tree had showered down their leaves (see *Apoc. Mos.* 20.4). It was thus from the forbidden fig tree that she made herself a 'girdle' (*Apoc. Mos.* 20.5). Having 'covered her shame', Eve persuaded Adam to eat of the poisoned fruit, promising to show him a 'great secret' (*Apoc. Mos.* 21.1).

As soon as he ate of the fruit he too 'knew his nakedness' and lamented his being deprived of the 'glory of God' (δόξα τοῦθεοῦ; *Apoc. Mos.* 21.6). Adam was initially clothed in the very 'glory of God'. Although this was lost, we are not explicitly told in *Apocalypse of Moses* 15–30 that Adam 'covered his shame' with fig leaves. There is no mention of God's making of the 'coats of skins' (Gen. 3.21), although Adam is allowed to take fragrant herbs out of paradise for the purpose of making an offering to God (*Apoc. Mos.* 29.1ff.).

To sum up, *Apocalypse of Moses* 20–21 teaches that Eve covered her 'shame' by making a girdle from the forbidden fig tree. It is indicated that both Adam and Eve were initially clothed in divine 'glory' (δόξα = כבוד) which seems to have been a kind of garment (although this is not explicit).

4. *From Philo to the Rabbis and Samaritans*

In addition to the postbiblical materials touched upon above there exists a rich variety of interpretations of Gen. 3.7 and 3.21 in certain of the works of Philo of Alexandria (died c. 45 CE ?), in the various streams of targumic tradition, in some rabbinic and later midrashic compilations and in writings expressive of Samaritan theology. Only a selective and brief indication of the materials contained in these sources can be given here.

a. *Philo* offered two sexually oriented explanations of the first couple's choice of fig leaves for making of 'loincloths' (Gen. 3.7). They chose fig leaves because: (1) the fig is sweet and pleasant to the taste like the sensual pleasure of coition, (2) the leaves of the fig tree are 'rough' like the 'pain' that accompanies and surrounds sexual intercourse (= psychosexual trauma not unrelated to female menstruation and childbirth [?]; see *Quaest. in Gen.* 1.41-42; cf. *Leg. All.* 2.79-80). The fig had sexual connotations in the ancient Jewish world and to an even more marked degree in Graeco-Roman antiquity. For Philo (on one level) Gen. 3.1ff. indicated that the 'senses' (= the woman) seduced the 'mind' (= the man) as a result of the inclination to pleasure (= the serpent) which led to a loss of innocence (unabashed 'nakedness') and the rise of limited human opinion. Gen 3.7 points to the sexual and sensate nature of human existence (see *Leg. All.* 2.79-80). In reply to those who 'ridicule the text', Philo taught that God at Gen. 3.21 meant to give mankind an example by indulging in the humble work of tailoring. When he underlined the preciousness of the apparently cheap, animal 'coats of skins' he may have been polemicizing against such as gave weight to Orphic, Bacchic or Pythagorean traditions about the impurity of garments made from animal flesh or products (the polluting nature of woollen garments as opposed to those made of fine linen; cf. *Gen. R.* 20.12; *b. Sot.* 14a). His symbolic interpretation of Gen. 3.21 is summed up at *Quaest. in Gen.* 1.53b where he reckons that the 'tunic of skin' symbolizes the natural skin of the human body. Having formed the 'First Mind' (= 'Life' or Eve; see LXX Gen. 3.20) it was necessary that God make a 'body' (= the 'tunic of skin', Gen. 3.21b) through which these faculties could interrelate or operate (see *Quaest. in Gen.* 1.53; cf. 4.1 on Gen. 18.12). In interpreting Gen. 3.21 in this way, Philo was doubtless influenced by the LXX rendering of 'coats of skins' (χιτώνας δερμιτινους) and by Greek philosophical ideas about the body being the 'garment' (χιτών) of the soul. Interesting variations on this mode of exegesis are to be found in early ('heterodox') Syrian Christian literatures, in Patristic writings, Mandaean, Manichaean, Samaritan and Hermetic texts as well as at one point in the Babylonian Talmud (*b. Nid.* 25a).

b. *The Targumim* are, loosely speaking, Aramaic translations of passages or books of the Hebrew Bible which may or may not be interpretative or haggadic and contain tannaitic (pre-2nd cent. CE) Jewish traditions. Much that is of interest is to be found in the targumic versions of Gen. 2.25, 3.7 and 3.21 in the following major streams of targumic tradition: *Targum Onqelos, Targum Pseudo-Jonathan* (= 'The Targum of Jerusalem'), *The Fragment Targum* and *Targum Neofiti*.

Neither *Targum Onqelos, The Fragment Targum* nor *Targum Neofiti* diverge radically from the Hebrew text in their translation of Gen. 2.25 and 3.7. Nothing is said about any initial ('pre-Fall') 'glory/honour' (יקר; cf. Ps. 49.12 [13]) or special garments in which the first couple were clad. The markedly more haggadic *Targum Pseudo-Jonathan* to Gen. 2.25 and 3.7 not only suppresses the notion of the first couple's 'nakedness' (Gen. 2.25) by speaking of their 'wisdom' but leads us to believe that they had an initial 'glory/honour' (יקר) which they were soon to lose (*Targ. Ps.-J.* to Gen. 2.25). At Gen. 3.7, *Targum Pseudo-Jonathan* also implies that the first couple were initially clothed or created in (lit.) 'nail-skin garments' (לבוש טופרא) which most likely originated in an attempt to interpret

Gen. 3.21 (the 'coats of skins'; applied to the Edenic or 'pre-Fall' period; cf. *Gen. R.* 18.6). We learn about the post-Edenic attire of the first couple in all four of the streams of targumic traditions mentioned above. At Gen. 3.21, *Targum Onqelos, Targum Pseudo-Jonathan, The Fragment Targum* and *Targum Neofiti* all make mention of the 'garments of glory/honour' (להושין דיקר; *Targ. Neof.*, לבושין דאוקר) of the first couple. *Targum Pseudo-Jonathan* to Gen. 3.21 alone has it that the 'garments of glory/honour' were made from the 'skin cast off by the serpent' (cf. *PRE* 20; *Midr. Teh.* 1 on Ps. 92.1). It seems likely that the snake-skin garments tradition was originally distinct from that about the 'garments of glory/honour' for, far from their being 'glorious' or 'worthy', they may have been intended to indicate that the inclination to evil was rooted in the fleshly body. Further traditions about the post-Edenic transmission of Adam's priestly or glorious garments are found in certain of the targumin to Gen. 27.15 and 48.22 as well as in rabbinic and other Jewish sources.

c. *Rabbinic literature* contains a considerable amount of tradition about the initial 'glory' and garments of Adam and Eve. While Gen. 2.25 seems not to have engaged the minds of many among the ancient Rabbis (cf. *Gen. R.* 18.6), some did regard the forbidden tree as a fig tree (this is not explicit in Genesis) which provided the material for the first couple's making of fig-leaf garments (see *Gen. R.* 15.7; *PRE* 20). Gen. 3.7 neither indicates that the first couple were initially blind or that they both wore the same kind of fig-leaf garments (*Gen. R.* 19.6). The act of making fig-leaf garments was taken by some Rabbis to be a sign of their repentance (fig leaves being 'rough'). Clear evidence exists that some Rabbis interpreted Gen. 3.21 in terms of the Edenic and not post-Edenic attire of Adam and Eve (see *Gen. R.* 18.6), which throws light on the tradition that the first couple were originally clothed in 'nail-skin garments' (so *Targ. Ps-J.*) or in 'garments of light' (see below).

Rabbinic interpretations of Gen. 3.21 may be loosely classified in the following manner: (1) *moralistic interpretations*: God's act of making the 'coats of skins' is an object lesson for mankind (see *Gen. R.* 20.12; *b. Sot.* 14a); (2) *somatic interpretations*: here the 'coats of skins' are in one way or another seen to be indicative of or connected with the human body (see *b. Nid.* 25a; cf. on Philo above); (3) *naturalistic interpretations*: concern is here focused on the nature of the mundane material from which the 'coats of skins' were made, or where God got the material from (see *Gen. R.* 20.12; the 'skins' of Gen. 3.21 being taken literally and [usually] in animalistic terms); and (4) *supernaturalistic interpretations*: traditions in which the garments of Adam and Eve are pictured as having been glorious, radiant or luminous or the like; obviously not unrelated to the traditions about the priesthood or angelic status of the first man (see above).

It must suffice at this point to note the following supernaturalistic-type interpretations of the 'coats of skins' of Gen. 3.21. Rabbi Isaac the Elder reckoned that the garments of Adam and Eve were 'as smooth as a fingernail and as beautiful as a precious stone [or pearl]' (*Gen. R.* 20.12; cf. the 'nail-skin' garments of *Targ. Ps-J.*). In *Pirke de Rabbi Eliezar* (14.20), mention is made of the radiant or glorious garments of Adam; a 'skin of [finger] nail' and a 'cloud of [radiant] glory' covered him until he ate of the forbidden tree (cf. *Targs.* to Gen. 3.21; *ARN* [B]). It is recorded in *Gen. R.* 20.12 that the Torah of Rabbi Meir (fl. c. 150 CE)—like certain MSS of the so-called *Severus Scroll* (a 1st cent. CE source of popular variant readings [?])—read 'coats of light' (כתנות אור) in place of 'coats of skins' (כתנות עור; Gen. 3.21). Explanatory glosses have it that Adam's garments were 'garments of light' in that they were 'like a torch' (shedding light [?]; less probably, 'like a rue' or bushy plant) or 'broad at the bottom and narrow at the top' (tapered like a torch or skin tight and translucent [?]). The reading 'garments of light' may have arisen in late Second Temple times in circles influenced by 'proto-Gnostic' Adamology or Iranian first-man mythology (cf. *Gen. R.* 3.4. *Zohar* 1.36b and the *Shi'ur Komah* traditions) and have been encouraged by the general weak pronunciation of Hebrew gutturals around the first century CE (pronouncing *aleph* for the *^{c}ayin* in the Hebrew for 'skins' as if the text read 'light'.

In his *Legends of the Jews*, V, p. 103 n. 93 [Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society of America, 1955]) Ginzberg drew attention to a probably early and 'unknown Midrash' recorded in mediaeval Jewish sources to the effect that the first couple's garments were made from the skin of Leviathan, a creature which figures in a rich variety of myths and traditions recorded in ancient Near Eastern and biblical texts as well as in certain rabbinic, Christian, Gnostic, magical and other ancient literatures. This tradition is of considerable interest in the light of Leviathan's being pictured in rabbinic sources as a creature of great glory (see for example *Pes. K.* [1876 on Job 41.7]; *b. B. Bat.* 74b) and the possibility that there existed an early (tannaitic

[?]) branch of Jewish mysticism surrounding Behemoth and Leviathan (reflected in such Gnostic texts as the cosmological Diagram of the Ophians mentioned in Origen's *Contra Celsum* [6.25] [?]) There appears to be some connection between rabbinic Adam speculation and the traditions about Leviathan. Garment imagery and eschatological themes are connected with this complex of traditions. Finally, but by means exhaustively in this connection, it should be noted that there are rabbinic traditions about the pre-existence and handing down of Adam's glorious (sometimes priestly) garments (cf. above).

d. *Samaritan literatures* contain an Adam–Moses typology in which the first man is given an exalted primordial status in the light of the glory of Moses' prophethood. In such texts as the *Molad Moshe* ('The Birth of Moses', 12th cent. CE [?] but reflecting much earlier traditions), Adam's initial splendour is adumbrated in terms of the pre-existent light of Moses which was the light of creation (Gen. 1.3). According to the Samaritan *Malef* (14th–18th cent. CE, again containing ancient traditions), Adam had no 'evil impulse' (*yeṣer ha-ra'*) before his expulsion from Eden and both he and Eve were clothed in the primordial light. It was in consequence of the evil Belial's seduction of Eve that they were divested of their light garments and came to be clothed in the 'coats of skins' or fleshly bodies wherein resided the 'evil impulse'. Pious Samaritans who observe the Mosaic law will overcome the death sentence (Gen. 3.19), subdue the 'evil impulse' and ultimately be clothed in the garments of light lost by Adam. While the *Memar Marqeh* (early 4th cent. CE [?]) attests the tradition about Adam's Edenic luminosity and speaks about the primordial light being transmitted down through a chain of ancestral saints to shine in its fullness in Moses (cf. Exod. 34.29-30; see 2.10; 5.23; 6.3-4), the Samaritan *Asatir* (= *Chronicle* I; early mediaeval [?]) teaches that both the rod and garments of Adam were received by Moses (9.22; cf. the Syriac *Book of the Bee* 30). A number of Samaritan works including the *Ḥilluk* ('Way of Life', 15th-16th cent. CE [?]) have it that the pious will enter the eschatological Eden and, like Adam, be clothed in angelic glory and splendour.

Concluding Note

It has been seen that, apart from some interesting interpretations of Gen. 2.25 and 3.7, early postbiblical Jewish literatures contain a variety of traditions about the nature of the garments of Adam and Eve (or Adam alone) which came to be associated with or grew out of attempts to clarify Gen. 3.21. Ancient Babylonian and/or Iranian (Zoroastrian) traditions about the splendid garments of various kings, heroes and gods probably contributed to the emergence of those Jewish traditions that picture Adam's garments as being in one way or another garments of light or glory. The early Jewish exaltation of Adam to (high-) priestly and/or angelic status was doubtless also important in this respect. The sources discussed above contain the following traditions about the nature of Adam's/the first couple's garments: (1) the first couple were initially clothed in 'glorious garments' (or less probably, 'worthy garments') or in the the divine 'glory', 'lustre' or 'splendour', in a 'cloud of glory'; (2) Adam's garments were (high-) priestly garments which were handed down; (3) the first couple were clothed in the primordial light or in 'garments of light'; (4) the garments of the first couple were made from the shining skin of Leviathan; (5) the first couple were initially clothed in 'nail-skin' garments perhaps with the implication that their clothes were smooth, tight-fitting, pearly, translucent and luminous, jewel-like or perfumed (?); (6) the first couple's 'coats of skins' (Gen. 3.21) were their fleshly skin or physical bodies; (7) the post-Edenic garments of the first couple were made from the skin and/or wool of either the goat, hare, lamb/sheep or weasel, or from (fine) linen. It even came to be supposed, in view of the tradition that the first couple were initially clothed in 'nail-skin garments' (seen as a bright integument or fingernail-type coat of light), that the only post-Edenic trace of the primordial clothing is the human fingernails, gazed at at the termination of Sabbaths and Festivals in the *habdalah* light.

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THE FALL INTO KNOWLEDGE: THE GARDEN OF EDEN/PARADISE IN GNOSTIC LITERATURE

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Method

In this paper discussion of the Garden of Eden/paradise in Gnostic literature will be focused on one passage, *Hypostasis of the Archons* [= *Hyp. Arch.*] 88.24–91.7. This restriction is dictated in part by practical considerations: the Garden of Eden/paradise was an important motif for the Gnostics and it would be impossible to do justice to all the relevant material in the space available. There are also profound methodological reasons for the restriction. In studying Gnosticism one must be constantly alert to the diversity of the sources and avoid unwarranted harmonization and synthesis. 'Gnosticism' (like 'mysticism' and 'apocalyptic') is—in a sense—an artificial construct invented by modern scholarship. Despite its Greek form, the term was, apparently, coined in the eighteenth century. The early haeresiologists, such as Irenaeus and Hippolytus, describe various groups as *gnostikoi*, but they do not speak generically of 'Gnosticism', nor do they attempt to define an abstract system of thought which bound the groups together. The field of Gnosticism as marked out by modern scholarship is vast and clearly includes diverse elements. Kurt Rudolf's standard introduction to the subject, *Gnosis*, covers not only the Nag Hammadi texts and the Patristic testimonia, but Mandaeism and Manichaeism as well.[1] Even the Nag Hammadi library, all of which was written in the same language within a short space of time, and which emanates from the same physical source, is surprisingly disunified. Some of the documents, such as the fragment of Plato's *Republic* and the hermetic writings, are clearly not Gnostic in origin. Others set out apparently different and logically incompatible Gnostic systems, which, in terms of the classifications of the haeresiologists, belong to quite distinct Gnostic 'schools'. So it is not possible in any detailed way to talk even of the Gnosticism of Nag Hammadi. Did the person, or group, that put this little library together believe in *all* the contradictory assertions found in these treatises? Perhaps they did. Perhaps they did not put a high premium on logical coherence. The so-called 'library' may, in fact, be a purely random collection of books, purged from a local monastery under threat of visitation by orthodox authorities. Whatever the explanation, one thing is certain: we must resist the impulse to harmonize the documents, to fit them into an abstract, synthetic schema, in the way Rudolf tries to do in his section on the 'Nature and Structure' of Gnosticism in *Gnosis*.[2] We must respect the anarchic diversity of the documents. If ever a phenomenon demanded a piecemeal, analytical approach—treatise by treatise, or even (where literary analysis warrants) section by section—it is Gnosticism. So, then, focusing on one passage is dictated not only by lack of space, but even more so by the nature of the material.

Widespread Ideas in Gnosticism

Although piecemeal analysis is, in strict method, the correct approach to Gnosticism, a few preliminary generalizations may prove useful to set the scene. Some scholars have detected Gnosticism or proto-Gnosticism in the first century CE, but Gnosticism properly so called is clearly documented only from c. 150 CE onwards. In the third and fourth centuries it was remarkably widespread in the Mediterranean world and the Middle East. Today we tend to associate it with Egypt, because the most important collection of Gnostic texts (all in Coptic) was discovered at Nag Hammadi (ancient Chenoboskion) in upper Egypt, where it was hidden away c. 400 CE. Until modern scholarship recovered it, Gnosticism was—to use Mead's phrase—'a faith forgotten', but at one time it was a serious rival to orthodox Christianity. It was probably the emergence of militant Christian orthodoxy that led to its suppression and virtual demise. It did not die out completely. One type of Gnosticism—Manichaeism—survived in central Asia on the fringes of the Christian world down to the Middle Ages. It successfully promoted its message all the way across to China. Another type of Gnosticism has survived to the present day in the religion of the marsh Arabs of southern Iraq—the Mandaeans.

What beliefs do scholars perceive as constituting the common core of Gnosticism? Following Werner Foerster's lead we may distinguish five points.[3]

1. Gnosticism is marked by a radical dualism between this world and the other world. This world (i.e. the material world in which we live) is evil; the other world is good. This world is characterized by deficiency, the other by fullness (*pleroma*). The contrasts between the worlds is at the same time a contrast between powers. In the world of the *pleroma* resides in perfect blessedness the unknown Father; this world, by way of contrast, is the domain of a malevolent creator deity, the Demiurge.
2. The 'spirit' or 'soul' of the Gnostic—his innermost self—is unalterably divine, and has its origin in the world of the *pleroma*.
3. The 'spirit', however, has fallen into the world of matter. There it has been imprisoned in the body and made to forget its divine nature and its home in the world above. It is subject to the malevolent rule of the powers of this world, and cannot of its own volition free itself.
4. Only a divine 'call' from the *pleroma* can begin the work of redeeming the spiritual element in man, of rescuing it from this world. The call awakens the 'spirit' from the sleep of ignorance and imparts to it knowledge of the true nature of this world and of its rulers. That 'call' is often brought by a redeemer figure who descends from the *pleroma* into this world.
5. Although it may be partially anticipated in ecstasy during this life, it is only after death that the spiritual element in man finally makes its ascent back to the *pleroma*. An important aspect of Gnostic teaching is concerned with the knowledge of how the ascending spirit can safely penetrate the 'barrier of evil' (i.e. the aeons controlled by the hostile Archons who govern this world), and escape back into the world of the *pleroma*.

This is a fair summary of a number of ideas that are widespread in Gnosticism, and it will help to put our discussion of individual passages in broad perspective. It must, however, be stressed again that there is no uniform Gnostic system—not even at the very general level just presented. Some of the five elements are missing in some texts, and in some schools; others are interpreted in mutually contradictory ways. And even when the same *ideas* are expressed there is a notable absence of a uniform technical terminology.

The Garden of Eden/Paradise in Hypostasis of the Archons

Hypostasis of the Archons, the fourth treatise of the second codex from Nag Hammadi, falls into two parts: (1) 86.27–92.18, the Primal History, which gives a Gnostic version of the early chapters of Genesis, from the creation to the flood; (2) 92.18–97.22, the Apocalypse of Norea, in which the angel Eleleth reveals to Norea, the daughter of Eve, the true nature of the Archons.[4] The Primal History, which includes an account of the Garden of Eden (88.24–91.7), is remarkable for the closeness with which it follows the biblical narrative: it even contains within it several undigested 'gobbets' of Bible which have been adapted only minimally to a Gnostic interpretation. For present purposes the most fruitful way of approaching the Primal History is to treat it as a reading of the biblical text, to compare it with the original, and to discover where and (if possible) why it has changed the biblical story. Close study shows that the Gnostic interpreter knew more than just the Bible: he had access to, and made extensive use of, a tradition of Jewish exegesis of the early chapters of Genesis, which is still partly attested in early rabbinic midrash, or in the Jewish pseudepigrapha.

1. *Adam is Placed in the Garden*

[Hyp. Arch. 88.24–99.3 = Gen. 2.15-17; cf. Gen. 3.3, 10]

The Archons 'took Adam [and] put him in the Garden, that he might cultivate [it] and keep watch over it' (88.24-26). This, as the drift of narrative shows, was no benevolent act, but part of an ongoing campaign by the evil Archons, who created this world, to dominate the spiritual world. When the Image of Incorruptibility was reflected from the upper, spiritual world on the waters in the world below (cf. Gen. 1.2) the Archons attempted to capture it. To this end they moulded the body of Adam from the soil, and one of their number (probably the 'psychic' Sabaoth) breathed 'soul' into the body. All their endeavours were to no avail: the image was not enticed into the man, as was shown by the fact that he remained motionless on the ground; 'they could not make him rise because of their powerlessness'. In the end, through the mysterious will of the Father of the

Entirety, the Spirit did descend from the upper world (the 'Adamantine land'), entered Adam, and he became 'a *living* soul'. It is with a view to controlling the Spirit which had entered into man that the Archons put him in the Garden. The Garden was a place of incarceration and death.

The Archons command Adam: 'From [every] tree in the Garden shall you eat; yet [from] the tree of recognizing good and evil do not eat, not [touch] it; for the day you eat [from] it, with death you are going to die'. Thus the Archons attempt to deny man knowledge of the true state of the world. In context the words are highly ironic. Far from bringing 'death', eating from the tree will, as the reader is expected to know, bring knowledge and life! Through the Father's providence the Archons' plans are frustrated. The Gnostic reading of Genesis cleverly exploits a well-known exegetical problem in the biblical text. According to Gen. 2.17, God commanded man: 'Of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, you shall not eat of it, for in the day you eat thereof you shall surely die'. In Gen. 3.3, however, Eve, repeating this commandment to the serpent says: 'Of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God has said: You shall not eat of it, *neither shall you touch it*, lest you die'. The Gnostic exegete clearly noticed the discrepancy between the two forms of the commandment (cf. 90.2-5), and his resolution of the contradiction has generated much of his exegesis. His interpretation appears to be as follows. The original command was issued by the chief Archon (? Sabaoth) in the form, 'Do not eat' (see 90.24-26; cf. 89.34–90.2). It was, however, conveyed by the other Archons to Adam in the form, 'Do not eat *or touch*' (88.26-33); and it was this augmented version that Adam told to Eve (90.2-5). The small, unwarranted change in wording led through divine providence to man's disobedience, and hence to his enlightenment: 'They [the Archons] do not understand what [they have said] to him; rather, by the Father's will, they said this in such a way that he might (in fact) eat, and that Adam might [not] regard them as would a man of exclusively material nature' (88.33–89.3). We have here an example of a motif common in the Gnostic texts; the Archons are constantly tricked by divine providence and their wicked purposes frustrated. In subtle ways the spiritual world breaks into and subverts the archontic world. But just how, in this instance, the unwitting alteration of the commandment produced this result is far from clear. The Gnostic exegesis is allusive; it presupposes a tradition of interpreting the biblical text. A rabbinic *aggadah* based on the discrepancy between Gen. 2.17 and Gen. 3.3 helps to clarify the situation. God originally commanded man not to *eat* of the Tree of Knowledge, but Adam, adding to the commandment, told it to Eve in the form, 'Do not eat *or touch*'. The serpent exploited the unauthorized addition. By showing Eve that he could *touch* the tree with impunity, he sowed doubt in her mind as to God's veracity, and so induced her to *eat* of the fruit.[5] A similar exegetical logic, with typical Gnostic inversion of values, probably lies behind the Gnostic account of this episode.

2. *The Creation of Eve*

[Hyp. Arch. 89.3-30 = Gen. 2.21-23]

The Gnostic version of the creation of Eve continues the dominant theme of the Archons' attempt to dominate the spiritual element in man, and the providential subversion of their plans. The 'sleep' which fell upon Adam (Gen. 2.21) is 'ignorance': the Archons try to deny man knowledge of the real nature of the world. While Adam is asleep they cut the spiritual element out of him, by creating woman from his side. 'They built up his side with some flesh in place of her, and Adam became endowed only with soul.' The idea is probably that of cutting an originally androgynous being into two. Thus they succeed in robbing Adam of the Spirit. Their nefarious intention of keeping Adam in the sleep of ignorance is foiled when the spirit-endowed woman comes to Adam and rouses him from his sleep. Thus the Spirit comes to Adam a second time and sets him on his feet (cf. 89.13-15). It now becomes clear in what sense the Gnostic interpreter regards Eve as Adam's 'helper' (compare *Hyp. Arch.* 88.17-18 with Gen. 2.18). A typical Gnostic reversal of the biblical text has taken place here. According to Gen. 2.22, it was the Lord God who brought Eve to Adam. Given the Gnostic identification of 'the Lord God' with Sabaoth and the other evil Archons, this becomes problematic: the Archons are unlikely to bring the spirit-endowed woman to man. So she comes to Adam of her own accord, just as the Spirit had first come to him willingly from the Adamantine land. Adam, roused from the sleep of ignorance, greets Eve: 'It is you who have given me life; you will be called "Mother of the Living"—For it is she who is my mother. It is she who is the physician, and the Woman, and She Who Has Given Birth.' Behind this lies Gen. 2.23: 'The man said. . . She shall be called woman', and Gen. 3.20, 'The man called his wife's name Eve; because she was the mother of all living'. It has long been recognized that many of the titles of Eve in *Hypostasis of the Archons* involve Aramaic puns on the Hebrew name *Ḥavvah.*

The Archons now turn their attention directly to Eve. Their hostility is described in powerful sexual terms. They lust for her, and desire to defile her, by sowing their seed in her. Thus the 'psychic' element ever seeks to corrupt the 'pneumatic'. But the Archons are 'blind' and 'witless' (mocking terms often applied to them in Gnostic literature), and Eve easily deceives them. She metamorphoses herself into a tree, and leaves behind her a 'shadowy reflection resembling herself', which the Archons foully defile. And so 'carnal woman', endowed with only body and soul, comes into being. The 'tree' into which the spirit-endowed woman was transformed must surely, in context, be the Tree of Knowledge. But what connection can this tree have with Eve? The answer probably is that the Gnostic interpreter identified the Tree of Knowledge with the Tree of Life (Gen. 3.22; Hebrew *'eṣ ḥayyim*; Aramaic *'ilan ḥayyayya*). There is no problem linking Eve (*Ḥavvah*) with the Tree of Life (*ḥayyim*/*ḥayyayya*). Early commentators speculated about the two trees of paradise and according to one view they were identical: note how both are said in the Bible to be 'in the midst of the Garden'. The essential identity in Gnosticism of 'life', 'spirit' and 'knowledge' would also have encouraged the Gnostic interpreter to make the connections. This incident of the Archons' assault on Eve has no obvious basis in the biblical narrative. There are, however, early Jewish *aggadot* which might explain it. According to one tradition Adam had two wives—a demonic one called Lilith, and the human one, Eve.[6] Lilith corresponds, with the usual inversion of values, to the spirit-endowed woman in the Gnostic text; Eve to the carnal woman. Once again we find evidence that the Gnostic exegete knew more than the biblical text: he had access to a tradition of interpretation as well, and, indeed, did not distinguish all that sharply between that tradition and Scripture.

3. *The Temptation and Fall*
[Hyp. Arch. 89.30–90.19 = Gen. 3.1-7]

The Spiritual Principle insinuates itself once more into the archontic world: it comes in the form of the serpent. This is one of the most striking Gnostic revisions of the biblical story. The serpent is good, not evil, an enlightener who brings saving knowledge! Certain Gnostic circles (e.g. the Ophites and the Naasenes) seem to have speculated at length on the role of the serpent. It is not too difficult to establish some sort of exegetical basis for this view in the biblical text. The Bible states that 'the serpent was more subtle than all the beasts of the field' (Gen. 3.1). So it was no ordinary animal. Indeed, it was no ordinary *snake*: it talked, and originally walked upright (cf. the curse in Gen. 3.14). In terms of Gnostic symbolism its upright posture could be taken as a sign that it was 'pneumatic'. It would be natural, then, to suppose that it symbolized or incarnated a spiritual power. One might compare the rabbinic tradition that the serpent symbolized or incarnated Satan/Samael.[7] The serpent's body was created by the Archons (90.32-33), but it became temporarily (90.11-12) a vehicle of the Spirit which, having departed from Eve, had taken up its abode in the Tree of Knowledge/Life. Once again a pun may at some stage have helped to forge the links: Eve (*Ḥavvah*) = life (*ḥayyim*/*ḥayyayya*) = serpent (Aramaic *ḥivya*). The fact that the serpent represents a different world of values from that of the Archons is neatly symbolized at *Hyp. Arch.* 89.35-36. The Archons refer to the Tree of the Knowledge of *Good and Evil*, but the serpent speaks of the Tree of the Knowledge of *Evil and Good*. What was evil to the Archons was good to the Spirit, and vice versa.

The serpent instructs carnal woman that the Chief Archon has deceived her and Adam. Far from dying should they eat of the tree, their eyes would be opened and they would become 'like gods knowing evil and good'. In denying them such an obvious good the Chief Archon was motivated by 'jealousy'—an echo of Exod. 20.5 ('I, the Lord your God, am a jealous God') which was often used by the Gnostics in a hostile and negative sense. Adam and Eve eat from the Tree of Knowledge, 'and their imperfection (*kakia*) became apparent in their lack of Acquaintance', that is, they became aware of the nature of the archontic world and of their lack of knowledge of the spiritual world. These words clearly interpret Gen. 3.7, 'The eyes of both of them were opened, and they knew that they were naked'. The opening of the eyes here is taken as indicating *spiritual* enlightenment. It can hardly have been intended literally, since Adam and Eve were not physically blind. The nakedness is also taken in a spiritual sense—a realization by Adam and Eve of their lack of saving knowledge. It is possible that the Gnostic interpreter held that the Tree of Knowledge was a fig tree, and that the fig leaves with which Adam and Eve covered their nakedness came from it. The symbolism would be obvious:

only by taking of that tree could their deficiency of knowledge be rectified.

4. *The Expulsion from Paradise*
[Hyp. Arch. 90.11–91.11 = Gen. 3.9-24]

The Gnostic retelling of the expulsion from paradise follows the Genesis narrative closely: the Chief Archon comes and interrogates Adam. Having discovered that he and Eve have eaten from the forbidden tree he curses them and the serpent who inspired the Fall, and he drives Adam out of the Garden. The following aspects of the Gnostic interpreters' reading of the Bible are particularly noteworthy. (a) The question which God addresses to Adam in Gen. 3.9, 'Where are you?', is used to denigrate the God of the Hebrew Bible, and to demonstrate his limited knowledge; 'Then the Chief Archon came; and he said, "Adam! Where are you?"—for he did not understand what had happened'. This question, with its implication that God is not omniscient, caused some embarrassment to rabbinical commentators (see e.g. Rashi *ad loc.*). (b) The curse imposed by God on the serpent (Gen. 3.14), on the woman (Gen. 3.16), and on the ground (Gen. 3.17) is taken as proof of the Archons' basic malevolence. They are incapable of blessing; their world is the world of the curse (*Hyp. Arch.* 91.5-6). (c) *Hyp. Arch.* 90.34-35: 'From that day, the Serpent came under the curse of the Authorities; until the All-powerful Man [*teleios*; cf. Eph. 4.13] was to come, that curse fell upon the Serpent'. This is probably an interpretation of the protevangelium in Gen. 3.15, but the exact exegetical process involved is far from clear. It is one of the few Christian references in *Hypostasis of the Archons*. (d) The toil which, according to Gen. 3.17, was imposed on man, is seen as a strategem of the malevolent Archons to prevent him from thinking about spiritual things: 'They threw Mankind into great distraction and into a life of toil, so that their Mankind might be occupied by worldly affairs, and might not have the opportunity of being devoted to the Holy Spirit'. Even after the expulsion from the Garden the war between the archontic world and the world of the spirit goes on.

Conclusions

1. Despite its strange and extravagant language, *Hypostasis of the Archons'* reading of the Garden of Eden episode in Genesis is, in general terms, clear and coherent. The Archons (i.e. the evil creator and

his minions) put man into the Garden in order to keep him in their power—to deny him knowledge of the true nature of the world, and especially of his heavenly origin. Their plans were, however, frustrated by the temptation and fall. At the instigation of the serpent, man defied the Archons and ate of the forbidden fruit; *gnosis* broke in and ignorance was dispelled. The Gnostic text stands in a revisionary relationship to the Bible: it systematically reverses the values of the earlier text. Elements which a traditional view of the Bible takes as positive (the creator, the Garden, the commandment not to eat) are seen as negative; elements traditionally regarded as negative (the serpent and man's disobedience) are seen as positive.

2. The Gnostic reading of the Garden of Eden episode can hardly have been *derived from* the Bible; rather it has been *imposed upon* the Bible. This point must be stated with care. It could be argued that the author of the second account of creation in Genesis actually intended to present the so-called 'Fall' of man as a positive event—an 'upward fall', necessary for human development and the growth of civilization. He meant to portray God in a rather dubious light as trying, out of jealousy and ill-will, to deny man two obvious goods—knowledge and eternal life: the story of the Garden of Eden is a sort of Hebrew counterpart to the Greek myth of Prometheus. If this line of thought is pursued vigorously, then it might become attractive to argue that the Gnostics could actually have *derived* their ideas from the text of Genesis. But this is rather unlikely. Although the Genesis account of the Garden of Eden can reveal surprising ambiguities, if read from a certain angle, it only does so only when viewed in isolation from the rest of Scripture. It is improbable that such an atomistic—essentially modern, critical—approach would have been adopted by the Gnostics. They encountered Genesis as part of a canon of sacred Scripture, and they clearly knew and made use of the Jewish and Christian traditions of Bible interpretation. In fact they do not distinguish clearly between the original text and the interpretative tradition: they effectively treat both as equally valid. Moreover, the fact that there is no consistent treatment of the Garden of Eden/paradise in Gnostic literature is hard to square with the view that the Gnostics drew their basic ideas from meditation on Scripture. A surprisingly positive interpretation of the Garden of Eden emerges from *On the Origin of the World* (NHC II, 5) 110.2–111.8. The contrast with *Hypostasis of the Archons* is all the more striking because, as has often been noted, there is a close relationship between *Hypostasis of the Archons* (NHC II, 4) and *On the*

Origin of the World (NHC II, 5). In *On the Origin of the World*, paradise is created by Justice (*dikaiosune*); in other words it was not created by the Archons whose world is characterized by *adikia*. In fact it is clearly stated that paradise lies *beyond* this world: 'It is outside the circuit of the moon and the circuit of the sun' (110.3-4). So the author of *On the Origin of the World* accepts the values of the biblical text: the positive image of paradise in the tradition proved too strong for him. Rather than offer a radical and revisionary reading of the biblical motif, he exploits it in another way. The Garden of Eden/paradise becomes for him, in effect, an image of the spiritual world from which man has fallen, and to which his spirit would hope to return in the *eschaton*.[8] When *Hypostasis of the Archons* and the other Gnostic texts reverse the values put on the Bible by Jewish and Christian tradition, it is hard not to detect a note of deliberate criticism and protest against traditional Judaism and Christianity.

3. How did the Gnostics come to stand the biblical narrative on its head in such a startling fashion? The answer is basically quite simple: they read the Bible from a hermeneutical vantage point which made this reversal natural, even imperative. That vantage point rested on certain axioms about the evil nature of the material world which were extraneous to, and indeed contradictory of, the biblical text. The acceptance of those axioms was logically prior to their reading of the text: the Gnostics themselves would have said the axioms came to them through divine illumination. From their vantage point they carried out a radical and systematic *eisegesis* of the biblical text. They exploited it as a source of words and images with which to clothe fundamentally alien ideas. All this may seem rather obvious, but its implications are often missed. It makes it difficult to argue that Gnosticism originated in Judaism as some, noting the undoubted Jewish component in some forms of Gnosticism, have argued.[9] There is a radical discontinuity between Gnosticism and earlier Jewish tradition: to get from one to the other requires a quantum leap. Perhaps that leap was made by some Jews in a moment of deep apostasy and alienation, but it is more likely that Gnosticism originated elsewhere and later tried to colonize Judaism. It is hard to say exactly where it did originate. It may have been among pagan intellectuals strongly influenced by late Platonism. (The presence of powerful Platonic elements in Gnosticism cannot be denied.) Gnosticism was a learned, scholarly movement. The circles in which it arose were syncretistic, with a strong interest in mythology, especially the myths of such exotic peoples as the Egyptians, the

Persians and the Jews. It is possible that they regarded these myths as expressing a sort of perennial philosophy, to which they had found the key. At bottom all these myths were saying the same thing. They expressed their world-view in terms of these myths, which they read from their hermeneutical vantage point. Gnosticism was not a centralized religion: it had no single founder, no 'church', no fixed canon of Scripture. It was a current in the 'spätantiker Geist', which crystallized in different forms. There were Gnostics of a philosophical bent who expressed their world-view in terms of Greek philosophy, particularly Platonism. Some Christians recast Christianity in a Gnostic mould. There is evidence that there were Jewish Gnostics who embraced a radical dualism. Some Gnostic ideas even appear to have penetrated rabbinic circles and influenced the Merkavah mystics.[10] But, all things considered, it is unlikely that Gnosticism *originated* in Judaism.

4. A final, rather paradoxical thought. *Hypostasis of the Archons* does grave damage to the text of Scripture—at least as it was traditionally understood—by inverting its value-system. Yet this should not blind us to the fact that in a curious way it also shows respect for Scripture: its treatment is not entirely dismissive and cavalier. It shows great ingenuity in reading in its ideas, in dressing up its eisegesis as exegesis. It should be clear, even from the brief analysis presented above, that exegetical processes lie behind the Gnostic retelling of the Bible. Both in method and content, *Hypostasis of the Archons'* treatment of Genesis recalls rabbinic midrash. Indeed, in terms of the typology of early Jewish Bible interpretation, *Hypostasis of the Archons* could be classified with the 'rewritten Bible', texts such as *Jubilees*, *Genesis Apocryphon* and *Pseudo-Philo*. There are indeed times, as Bernard Barc rightly argues,[11] when *Hypostasis of the Archons* seems to regard Genesis as simply mistaken. From his superior hermeneutical vantage point, the Gnostic writer knows what really happened: he opposes the *true* Genesis to the corrupted text found in the Hebrew Bible, which, after all, contains a version of events revealed by the evil Archon himself to Moses on Sinai. The biblical text contains falsehood, but it cannot be *totally* false. If the Gnostic writer were to maintain *that*, he would cut the ground from under his own feet. He tries to maintain the truth of as much of the detail of Scripture as he possibly can.[12] There is only one suggestion that makes sense of this paradoxical behaviour: the Gnostic writer is seeking to validate his views from Scripture! It is not simply, then, a

question of his using the language and imagery of the biblical myth as a way of expressing the Gnostic myth. The Gnostic writer is using the sanctity and authority of the biblical myth as a way of conferring legitimacy on his own ideas, even though these ideas involve a reversal of the Bible's value-system. Harold Bloom cites Gnosticism as a classic example of what he calls a 'strong' reading of an earlier tradition.[13] It might also be seen, in rather earthier terms, as an egregious example of an attitude which in Hebrew would be well characterized as *ḥuṣpah*!

Notes

1. See K. Rudolf, *Die Gnosis: Wesen und Geschichte einer spätantiken Religion* (Leipzig: Koehler & Arnelang, 1977); English translation by R.McL. Wilson (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1983).
2. *Gnosis* (ET), pp. 53-272.
3. W. Foerster, *Gnosis*, I (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1972), p. 9.
4. For text of *Hypostasis of the Archons*, with commentary, see R.A. Bullard, *The Hypostasis of the Archons* (Berlin, 1970); B. Layton, 'The Hypostasis of the Archons or the Reality of the Rulers', *HTR* 67 (1974), pp. 351-426; 69 (1976), pp. 31-101; B. Barc, *L'Hypostase des Archontes* (Louvain: Presses de l'Université Laval, 1980). In the present study translations of the Nag Hammadi texts are based on J.M. Robinson (ed.), *The Nag Hammadi Library* (Leiden: Brill, 1977).
5. *ARN* 1; *Gen. R.* 19.3; *PRE* 13; *b. Sanh.* 29a.
6. See L. Ginzberg, *Legends of the Jews*, V (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1925), p. 87 n. 40; R. Patai, *The Hebrew Goddess* (New York: Avon Books, 1967), pp. 220ff.; S. Hurwitz, *Lilith, die erste Eva* (Zürich: Daimon Verlag, 1980).
7. *PRE* 14; *Zohar Ḥadash* 1.36b. The tradition appears to be late in rabbinic literature, but see Ginzberg, *Legends*, V, p. 120 n. 60.
8. For an analysis of the theme of the Garden of Eden/paradise in *On the Origin of the World* see M. Tardieu, *Trois mythes gnostiques: Adam éros et les animaux d'Egypte dans un écrit de Nag Hammadi (II, 5)* (Paris: Etudes Agustiniennes, 1974), pp. 141-214. It is possible the Ophites located paradise somewhere beyond this world. Note its position on Hopfner's reconstruction of the Ophite diagram (see H. Chadwick, *Origen: Contra Celsum* [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1953], pp. 338-39). A.J. Welburn ('Reconstructing the Ophite Diagram', *NovT* 23 [1981], pp. 271-72) offers a different interpretation which makes the Ophite paradise a 'sublunar realm created by the archons', as in *Hyp. Arch.* Other discussions of the Garden of Eden/paradise in Gnostic literature include: J. Magne, 'Les récits de paradis à l'origine de mouvement gnostico-chrétien', in J. Ries and J.-M. Sevrin (eds.), *Gnosticisme et le monde hellenistique: Les objectifs du Colloque de Louvain-la-Neuve (11-14 mars 1980)* (Louvain-la-Neuve: Université Catholique

de Louvain, Institute Orientaliste, 1982), pp. 88-92; *idem*, 'L'exégèse de récit de paradis dans les écrits juifs, gnostiques et chrétiens', ***Augustinianum*** 22 (1982), pp. 263-70; S. Gero, 'The Seduction of Eve and the Trees of Paradise—A Note on a Gnostic Myth', *HTR* 71 (1978), pp. 299-301; J.-D. Kaestli, 'L'interprétation de serpent de *Genèse* 3 dans quelques textes gnostiques et la question de la gnose "ophite"', in Ries and Sevrin (eds.), *Gnosticisme*, pp. 116-30.

9. See further P.S. Alexander, 'Comparing Merkavah Mysticism and Gnosticism: An Essay in Method', *JJS* 35 (1984), pp. 1-18.

10. The classic statement of this view is G. Scholem, *Jewish Gnosticism, Merkabah Mysticism and Talmudic Tradition* (New York: Schocken Books, 2nd edn, 1965). See further P.S. Alexander, 'Jewish Elements in Gnosticism and Magic c.70 CE to c.270 CE', in W.D. Davies (ed.), *The Cambridge History of Judaism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, forthcoming).

11. Barc, *L'Hypostase*, pp. 19ff.

12. Cf. the attitude to the Old Testament in the Letter of Ptolemaeus to Flora (Epiphanius, *Panarion* 33.3-7). There the mixed character of the Law is explained. For many Gnostics the Archons and the world they created are not evil in an absolute sense: they are simply *deficient* in knowledge and goodness.

13. H. Bloom, 'Lying against Time: Gnosis, Poetry and Criticism', in B. Layton (ed.), *The Rediscovery of Gnosticism*, I (Leiden: Brill, 1980), pp. 57-72. In *The Breaking of the Vessels* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1982), p. 3, Bloom describes himself as 'a Jewish Gnostic, an academic, but party or sect of one'.

THE NEW ADAM IN THE THEOLOGY OF ST PAUL

Deborah F. Sawyer

Creation theology, based on the story of Adam found in the Genesis narrative, provides a major key to the understanding of Paul's own theology and his estimation of the person and nature of Jesus of Nazareth. For Paul, the present time is the dawn of the new creation; the New Adam has already appeared and the time is imminent for his return to consummate the transformation to the new age. Jesus, the messiah, the New Adam, has been raised from the dead: he is the first fruits of the new creation.[1]

Before we look in any detail at the passages in Paul's letters which reflect and interpret the story of Adam, let us ask the question, why does Paul base so much of his theology on creation imagery and typology?[2] Perhaps the first point to make in attempting to answer this question is that Paul was a first-century Jew who believed he was living in the messianic age.[3] This belief necessarily had cosmological implications. Once more God was *directly* involved in the world, as had been the case when the heavens and the earth were being brought into existence. Therefore this messianic age is once again the age of creation, parallel and transcendent to the former age of Adam.

This concept of the eschaton, the messianic age, containing within it the idea of a return to paradise, is not the invention of Paul but is a common motif in Judaism.[4] The idea appears in the biblical text, 'For behold I create a new heaven and a new earth' (Isa. 65.17). A vivid example from the Apocrypha can be found in *4 Ezra* where the angel who is revealing the secrets of the end time to Ezra reassures him with these words:

> But think not of your own case, and inquire concerning the glory of those who are like yourself, because it is for you that Paradise is opened, the tree of life is planted, the age to come is prepared, plenty is provided, a city is built, rest is appointed, goodness is established, and wisdom perfected beforehand (*4 Ezra* 8.51-52).

Again we find the picture of paradise for the messianic age at the end of the *Testament of Levi*:

> And in the messiah's priesthood the gentiles shall be multiplied in knowledge upon the earth, in his priesthood shall sin come to an end, and the lawless cease to do evil. And he shall open the gates of Paradise, and shall remove the threatening sword against Adam. And he shall give to the saints to eat from the tree of life, and the spirit of holiness shall be on them (*T. Levi* 18.9-11).

Therefore it would be a natural step for Paul to resort to the imagery and ideas of creation in order to articulate the meaning of his own time, the eschaton.[5] It is in the realm of creation that Paul can formulate a typology for Jesus of Nazareth in terms of his christological and soteriological significance.

By exploring creation imagery in his theology, however, Paul was not simply looking for a proof-text for his new convictions; he was also discovering a common image which would appeal as much to the Gentile as to the Jew. This can be seen as a second motive for using the story of Adam as a seed-bed for his new theology, and one to which we shall return later.

A third reason for Paul's recourse to the image of creation is that of his personal experience, that is, his feeling of transformation and his conviction of the messiahship of Jesus of Nazareth. Paul believed in the new creation because he himself understood his experience on the road to Damascus in terms of the birth of the new man.[6] He became a new man, a New Adam:

> We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death, so that as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the father, we too might walk in the newness of life (Rom. 6.4).

And writing to the Colossians:

> You have put off the old nature with its practices and have put on the new nature, which is being renewed in knowledge after the image of its creator (Col. 3.10).

For Paul each individual who acknowledges the messiahship of Jesus experiences a radical existential renewal; he or she becomes a new creation so that once more humankind can be in the image of God. It is because Jesus became the New Adam that every believer now can become a New Adam, choosing obedience rather than disobedience. Now humanity is free to follow the example of the New Adam rather than the Old. Baptism into the faith that Jesus is the messiah, the New Adam, is a moment of new creation for the believer in the light of the eschatological time.[7]

In his teaching on discipleship, Paul consistently refers to the pattern of Jesus' life to provide the model for the life and practice of the new communities. His catchphrase, 'Be imitators of me as I am of Christ' (1 Cor. 11.1), underlies everything he preaches and practises. Humankind is redeemed through the meritorious action of Jesus the messiah. In order that a person be redeemed they must imitate the action of Jesus, and for Paul the decisive action of Jesus was his choice of obedience to the will of God. This must be the same choice made by each follower of Jesus. Jesus was obedient because he was the messiah, the New Adam, the representative of humankind who made the hitherto unique choice which led to resurrection and life rather than dust and death:

> he emptied himself, taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. And being found in human form he humbled himself and *became obedient* unto death, even death on a cross. Therefore God has highly exalted him. . . (Phil. 2.7-8).

This is the example set by Jesus that is to be the model for all those who wish to share in his resurrection.

These three points provide some insight towards an understanding of Paul's concentration on the creation theme and the story of Adam. First, he was bearing witness to the messianic expectation of his time. Secondly, he was aware of the universal appeal embodied in the theme: Gentiles as well as Jews are descended from Adam who is the unifying common ancestor. Thirdly, the concept of the New Adam and the Old, of obedience versus disobedience, of resurrection rather than death, is mirrored in Paul's own Damascus experience and becomes the perfect model for discipleship.

Having discussed the motivation for Paul's turning to creation and Adam to develop his theology and Christology, let us now study the ways in which he implements these themes into a Christian scheme. Whenever one attempts to say anything about Pauline thought, caution must be applied to any comment which approaches a general statement. Unlike some New Testament writers, Paul never set out a systematic presentation of his gospel. All we possess of the thought of Paul is a collection of letters written in reply to specific situations and problems experienced in the earliest Christian communities.[8] What is more, the communities to whom he writes often have an intimate relationship with him. This is particularly true in the case of Corinth; Paul founded that community and he describes his role towards it in paternalistic terms. Hence Paul does not have to spell out clearly his beliefs and theological ideas in his letters. Even the community in Rome, which did not have a direct knowledge of Paul, had heard reports of his gospel.

Another problem in assessing the Pauline material derives from the apostle's own maxim:

> I have become all things to all men, that I might by all means save some (1 Cor. 9.22).

Seemingly, Paul is deliberately unsystematic and inconsistent. He is prepared to develop and adapt his ideas in order to deal with specific situations and, above all, to make the gospel acceptable and a reality for all humanity. The basic core to Pauline theology is the belief in the death, resurrection and glorification of Jesus the messiah, and his imminent return to judge the world and deliver the Kingdom to God. Everything else we read about in Paul's writings is there to accentuate this kerygma. This is the sense in which we should understand his creation language: Jesus is the messiah, and the advent of the messiah, in Paul's thought-world, had inevitable cosmological implications. Therefore Paul had to work through these implications in relation to Jesus in order to show that he was indeed the messiah.

Preaching the messiahship of Jesus was no easy task. Jesus did not fit into any expected messianic mould. Moreover, he had died the ignominious death of a criminal, crucified by the Romans. The paradox of the cross is at the forefront of Paul's mind when he addresses the problem of proclaiming Jesus as the messiah:

> But we preach the Messiah crucified, a stumbling block to Jews and folly to Gentiles. . . (1 Cor. 1.23).

But the resurrection of Jesus was the corner-stone of faith for the earliest believers. Paul was prompted into belief when the risen, glorified Jesus appeared to him on the road to Damascus. However, resurrection faith alone was not enough to ensure the survival and growth of this messianic sect; to proclaim in a convincing fashion a crucified messiah there needed to be a more solid theological framework. The resurrection provided the basis for expressing the life and death of Jesus in terms of God's covenant with the world, founded in creation. The resurrection could be seen as a victory for life over death. In the story of Adam, death comes as a punishment for Adam's disobedience and God curses Adam with these words:

> In the sweat of your face you shall eat bread till you return to the ground, for out of it were you taken; you are dust, and to dust you shall return (Gen. 3.19).

Jesus' resurrection to life, conversely, is a reward for his obedience. In contrast to Adam, Jesus does not become one with the earth but is transformed and raised to glory. In Paul's thought, Adam's disobedience, his sin, was not passed on from generation to generation in a hereditary manner. That is to say, Adam was not the biological source of original sin. Rather Paul writes:

> Sin came into the world through one man and death through sin, and so death spread to all men *because all men sinned* (Rom. 5.12).

St Augustine interpreted this verse in such a way as to understand that all men sinned *in Adam*.[9] The doctrine of Original Sin stems from debates of the fourth- and fifth-century Western church; Paul, a Jew of the first century, had no such view of the nature of humankind. Jewish anthropology held that individuals were born with two inclinations in equal measure: the inclination to do what is good and the inclination to do what is evil.[10] Thus every individual has the choice of Adam:

> Adam is therefore not the cause, save only of his own soul, but each of us has been the Adam of his own soul (*2 Bar*. 54.19).

Individuals are born with the potential to do what is right in the eyes of God. That is the theory; however, in practice the example which confronts every individual in the world is one of evil. And so the evil inclination dominates; this is the picture Paul displays in Rom. 5.12.

To introduce a second, a New Adam into this scheme and identify him with Jesus of Nazareth could imply an estimation of him as simply an individual who happened to choose the good inclination: obedience rather than disobedience, life rather than death:

> For as by a man came death, by a man has come also the resurrection of the dead (1 Cor. 15.21).

In this scheme Adam and Jesus are equal contenders: both are men, both have the same potential. The New Adam is essentially the same as the Old. If this is the correct interpretation of Paul's use of Adam typology, then it obviously has implications for his christological beliefs. If Paul simply regarded Jesus as the man who happened to make the right choice and thereby was raised to glory in heaven, then the uniqueness of Jesus would lie only in his obedience, not in his nature. He would not be in any sense divine, at least not before the resurrection. In theological terminology this would mean that Paul was an adoptionist. Jesus' divinity came when he was adopted by God through the resurrection—he was not originally of the same nature as God.

Is this what is implied by Paul's use of Adam typology? Let us begin with the first Adam and his predicament as they would have been understood by Paul and his contemporaries. In early Judaism, Adam was deemed to have been no ordinary man. Before he disobeyed God he was more of an angel than a creature (*2 En.* 30); he was honourable, great and glorious. Physically he was enormous (*Gen. R.* 8.1); he was created immortal (*4 Ezra* 3.7; *2 Bar.* 17.3; 23.4); he directly reflected the glory of God (Sir. 49.16); this glorified appearance enabled him to see throughout the world (*b. B. Bat.* 58a). Adam was made in the image of God. As such he was in a closer relationship to God than any other being. Consequently the angels wanted to make him the object of their worship: to look upon Adam would be the nearest thing to seeing God (*LAE* 12.1).

So we can see that the first Adam was depicted in highly glorified language and imagery. Before his act of disobedience, Adam could not have been regarded in any sense as a man like other men. Furthermore, the consequences of Adam's sin were also embellished in Paul's contemporary Judaism:

> For since when he (Adam) transgressed untimely death came into being,
> grief was named and anguish was prepared,
> and pain was created, and trouble consummated
> and disease began to be established. . .
> and the greatness of humanity was humiliated,
> and goodness languished (*2 Bar.* 56.6).

Not only was Adam no ordinary man, but the world as it was after his disobedience was no neutral country. Jesus as the New Adam encountered the world as a lost paradise. It was a place full of hostility, suffering and sinfulness; it was a staggering contrast to the paradise where Adam had made his choice. In Paul's understanding, Jesus was an equal contender with Adam, the Adam of the Garden of Eden.

He was equal to the Adam of Jewish imagination who reflected the glory of God and who cannot be compared to subsequent humanity. Moreover, Jesus surpassed even this glorified Adamic figure in that he overcame a world full of the power and dominion of sin and death:

> 'O death, where is thy victory? O death, where is thy sting?' The sting of death is sin. . . but thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ (1 Cor. 15.55-57).

The Christology found in Paul's writings does not have to be adoptionist simply because he introduces Adam typology to illustrate the cosmological significance of Jesus the messiah. In fact a fuller understanding of the contemporary mythology reveals no mere man in Adam: he is worshipped by angels, the possessor of the glory of God, indeed he is the son of God:[11]

> 'The first Adam became a living being'; the last Adam became a life-giving spirit. But it is not the spiritual which is first but the physical and then the spiritual. The first man was from the earth, a man of dust, the second man is from heaven. As was the man of dust, so are those who are of the dust; and as is the man of heaven, so are those who are of heaven. Just as we have borne the image of the man of dust, we shall also bear the image of the man of heaven (1 Cor. 15.45-49).

The first Adam was from the earth. This origin of the first Adam is made evident to human eyes by the nature of his fate rather than by the nature of his creation. The same applies to the second Adam whose heavenly origin can only be discerned through the evidence of the resurrection. It is in the destinies of the two Adams that they can be compared. The first Adam was from the earth, not necessarily because of the nature of his creation, but rather because of the nature of his end when he becomes dust. But that end was Adam's own choice, he could have avoided God's curse. Adam was intended for heaven because he was created in the image of God. The last man, the second Adam, is from heaven because he did not become dust, his body did not see corruption. His resurrection marks a new generation of humankind who can now follow the example of the New Adam rather than the Old; they can become children of the New Adam belonging to the new creation. Jesus' resurrection inaugurates the new age, he is the first fruits of the new creation; his resurrection guarantees resurrection and life for all those who have faith.

As I mentioned above, when attempting to understand Paul we must be aware of the context in which he is writing. In the case of this passage from 1 Corinthians, Paul is answering a specific question concerning resurrection of the dead in the light of the fact that some members of the community have died and not been raised in the same manner as Jesus. To answer this question Paul shows that there is a continuity between the first Adam and the second, between the old creation and the new:

> As by a man came death, by a man has come also the resurrection of the dead (1 Cor. 15.21).

Jesus and Adam share the same physical nature, but Jesus becomes the man from heaven, the last Adam, at his death. This is the point of his utter obedience:

> And being found in human form he humbled himself and became obedient unto death, even death on a cross. Therefore God has highly exalted him. . . (Phil. 2.8-9).

Jesus had to face death and he had to die because he had to become the same as the first Adam, and the same as all humankind, in order to give birth to the new age from the old. This was done to enable humanity that had borne the image of the man of dust to bear the image of the man of heaven also. Jesus' act of obedience, the cross, becomes the pivot between the age of death and the age of life.

Through his obedience, Jesus fulfils the original intention of creation; he is the unblemished Adam who would not eat the forbidden fruit. He is the 'man from heaven', according to Paul, because he uniquely bears the image of God. He can be understood to be the man, the Adam, created in the image of God who is described in Gen. 1.27. It is in this sense that Jesus is pre-existent in Paul's mind. God created the world for this perfect Adam who only became manifest in the flesh in the person of Jesus of Nazareth:

> He is the image of the invisible God, the first-born of all creation; for in him all things were created, in heaven and one earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or authorities—all things were created through him and for him. He is before all things, and in him all things hold together (Col. 1.15-17).

Using the typology of Adam,[12] Paul is able to develop his Christology to the extent that, paradoxically, the last Adam becomes the first, and Jesus becomes pre-existent in the mind of God from the moment of creation.[13] He becomes the origin and reason for creation.

Let us return for a moment to the more precise context of 1

Corinthians 15, and to the question of the resurrection of the dead. As I mentioned earlier, Paul constantly refers to Jesus as the pattern or model for discipleship. It follows then, Paul argues, that just as Jesus had to experience death in order to experience resurrection, so too do those believers who will die before his Second Coming. It is only then that death will be conquered once and for all:

> For as in Adam all die, so in Christ shall all be made alive. But each in his own order: Christ the first fruits, then at his coming those who belong to Christ. Then comes the end when he delivers the kingdom to God the Father after destroying every rule and every authority and power. For he must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet. The last enemy to be destroyed is death (1 Cor. 15.22-26).

We will turn now to Romans 5 which provides another important example of Paul's use of Adam typology. Paul did not have any personal knowledge of the Christian community in Rome: his letter to Rome was written to prepare the ground for his first visit. Consequently, this letter does not contain particular replies to specific questions: instead it is of a more general nature than, for example, 1 and 2 Corinthians. There is one problem within the Roman community which has come to Paul's attention, however, and one to which he addresses much of his material. This is the problem of the relationship between Jewish and Gentile Christians, a problem that was apparent also in the Pauline churches. Paul, as a former Pharisee and now the apostle to the Gentiles, was perhaps the most qualified person of the time to arbitrate between the two factions. Moreover, because Paul wanted to recommend himself to the community in Rome, it would be on this question that he would be advised to concentrate. There is evidence within his letter which seems to suggest that there was a hostile interpretation of Paul's teaching on justification by faith rumoured in Rome and one to which Paul has to address himself: 'Are we to continue in sin that grace may abound?' (Rom. 6.1). If Paul could provide articulate and useful arguments towards a solution to the problem of Jewish and Gentile rivalry within the Roman community, then this might dilute any hostile feelings that existed in relation to other aspects of his teaching.

Thus Paul, in writing this letter, takes the opportunity to set out his gospel of grace and faith in terms of reconciliation between Jews and Gentiles, and it is within this context that Paul introduces his Adam typology. Adam is the common ancestor, the origin of all humankind.

Adam sinned in disobeying God and all the sons and daughters of Adam in successive generations have followed his example. Gentiles have sinned even though they are not under the law of the Jews:

> Sin indeed was in the world before the law was given, but sin is not counted where there is no law. Yet death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over those whose sins were not like the transgression of Adam, who was a type of the one who was to come (Rom. 5.13-14).

It is Adam, Paul argues, who provides the typology for the messiah, not Moses or Abraham. In using this typology all humankind belong to the family of the messiah. There is no exclusion. All can share equally in the fruits of his act of redemption:

> For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek; the same Lord is Lord of all and bestows his riches upon all who call upon him (Rom. 10.12).

One of the most debated subjects in Pauline studies revolves around the question of Paul's attitude to the law. It is seen by many modern scholars to be the major issue on which Paul betrays his Jewish identity to a degree that marks him out as the first essentially Christian writer. Perhaps by looking more closely at Paul's speculation on the universal figure of Adam and his interpretation of Jesus the messiah as the second Adam, we might find that he does not necessarily fall away from his Jewish heritage. Paul took seriously the cosmological implications of the advent of the messiah. The messianic age heralded a return to paradise where no external law was required. Life in the new Garden of Eden would encounter no such problems as had befallen the first paradise. As we read in *4 Ezra* 8.52, 'Goodness will be established and wisdom perfected beforehand'. In the words of the prophet Jeremiah:

> I will put my law within them, and I will write it upon their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people (Jer. 31.33).

If Paul believed that the new, messianic age involved the notion of paradise, as his interpretation of Jesus as the New Adam would lead us to believe, then since the messiah *had* come and the new creation was being experienced already in the lives of believers, there was no need for the law. The law was given in the light of human weakness and disobedience to the will of God. It belongs to the age of the first Adam. Once the sin of Adam had been removed through the advent of the messiah, then there would be no need for the law:

> the law was our custodian until Christ came, that we might be justified by faith. But now that faith has come, we are no longer under a custodian; for in Christ Jesus you are all sons of God, through faith (Gal. 3.24-26).

In the new age, God's grace would transform humankind. According to Paul, they would be reconciled to the Father, no longer children of Adam but now children of God.[14] Thus the abrogation of the law in Pauline thought should be understood in the eschatological context in which Paul is writing. If the messiah has come, then there should be no need for the law which had served its purpose in bearing witness to the will of God in the pre-messianic era. But now the spirit of God has come through the Christ-event, and for Paul it is the spirit that transforms the hearts and minds of humankind as well as their mortal bodies: 'If we live by the Spirit, let us also walk by the Spirit' (Gal. 5.25).

It is by developing the typology of Adam that Paul can preach a gospel of reconciliation between Jews and Gentiles. Furthermore, he can emphasize that the new eschatological relationship between the believer and God no longer requires circumcision:

> For neither circumcision counts for anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creation (Gal. 6.15).

Jesus is the second Adam, not the second Abraham. By removing the obstacle of circumcision, Paul opened the way for Christianity to spread outside the Jewish world. It was Adam typology, with the universal image of paradise, that allowed this to happen. Paul depicts Jesus as the New Adam who will restore the world and humankind to their former glory:

> You have put on the new nature which is being renewed in knowledge after the image of its creator (Col. 3.10).

Notes

1. The Pauline conception of the death and resurrection of Jesus marking the inauguration of the new age of creation is well stated in J.C. Beker, *Paul the Apostle: The Triumph of God in Life and Thought* (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1980), esp. p. 191.

2. C.K. Barrett (*From First Adam to Last: A Study in Pauline Theology* [London: SPCK, 1962], p. 6) comments, 'whenever in Paul we meet the word "man" (or other words, such as "image", used in Gen. i-iii), we may suspect that

Adam is somewhere in the background, characteristically hiding himself, though now behind the Greek language'.

3. Internal evidence from Paul's own writings in the New Testament underline his Jewish identity; for example, Rom. 9.3; Gal. 1.14; 1 Cor. 11.22. Also, it is apparent from Paul's own writings that he was fervent in his belief that he was living in eschatological times. 1 Thess. 4.16-17 includes his conviction that he would be alive when the eschaton reached its climax.

4. It is possible to discern a tendency in the teaching of Jesus on marriage (Mk 10.6-9) towards the ideal of paradise. Again, this can be understood in an eschatological context: Jesus' preaching on the Kingdom of God. See C.C. Rowland, *Christian Origins* (London: SPCK, 1985), p. 158.

5. For a more detailed discussion of the Jewish eschatological context for Paul's understanding of the figure of Adam and his use of creation imagery, see Barrett, *First Adam*, and W.D. Davies, *Paul and Rabbinic Judaism* (London: SPCK, 1965).

6. See Gal. 1.13-16; compare Acts 9.3-7; 22.3-11.

7. R. Schnackenburg (*Baptism in the Thought of St Paul* [Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1964], pp. 196-203) draws attention to the eschatological significance of sacramental theology in Pauline thought.

8. See Rowland, *Christian Origins*, pp. 205-207.

9. St Augustine's interpretation of Rom. 5.12 reflects the Vulgate version of the text which reads 'in quo' ('in whom') for the Greek phrase, ἐφ' ᾧ, translated in our version as 'because'. The Latin version then reads, 'all men sinned *in Adam*'. This is not the meaning of the Greek. See, e.g., C.K. Barrett, *A Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans* (London: A. & C. Black, 1962), p. 111.

10. For an account of the Jewish understanding of the created nature of man, see E.E. Urbach, *The Sages: Their Concepts and Belief*, I (Jerusalem: Magnes, 1975), pp. 471-83; also pp. 420-25.

11. In Luke's Gospel we find a genealogy which traces Jesus of Nazareth directly back to Adam who is 'son of God' (Lk. 3.38).

12. We are justified in using the term 'typology' rather than 'analogy' (*contra* Barrett, *First Adam*, p. 112), in that the Adam of Gen. 1.26-27, the ideal Adam in the mind of God at creation, is the type for Jesus. See Rom. 5.14.

13. K. Barth (*Church Dogmatics*, IV.1 [Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1936ff.], p. 513) notes that Paul describes Christ in 1 Cor. 15 as the 'last Adam', and he comments that this is not in relation to the first Adam of Gen. 3; rather, Christ is the first and true Adam. The unknown Adam of the Genesis story, Christ is the true humanity, uniquely realized.

14. See Gal. 4.6; Rom. 8.15-17.

EXILED FROM EDEN: JEWISH INTERPRETATIONS OF GENESIS

Paul Morris

1. *Introduction to Jewish Interpretations of Genesis*

> She [The Torah] is a Tree of Life to them that lay hold of her (Prov. 3.18).

It is important to begin by noting that the Jewish readings of the Garden narrative do not hold the central place in Judaism that doctrine(s) of original sin play in the Christian tradition. The interpretation of Adam and Eve, their sin and punishment, the serpent, the trees, and the expulsion from Eden have, however, greatly exercised the Jewish imagination, and have generated, directly and indirectly, a vast exegetical literature. Elements of the Eden story have been a constant challenge to Jewish writers from the prophet Ezekiel and the authors of Proverbs and Song of Songs to contemporary commentators, as each in turn, from the creation until the messiah,[1] is bound to start again, as it were, with Adam—for Adam always promises a new end/beginning.

Rabbi J.B. Soloveitchik, one of the leading contemporary Orthodox thinkers, for example, in his influential essay 'The Lonely Man of Faith'[2]—drawing on a tradition going back to Philo—presents a phenomenological account of the observant Jew based on the contrast between the first Adam of Genesis 1, and the Adam of ch. 2. 'Adam I' is mechanical or technological man while 'Adam II' is his 'man of faith'. In a very different vein, Yoram Kaniuk, the Israeli novelist, in his 1969 work, *Adam ben Kelev* (translated as *Adam Resurrected*), explores the post-Holocaust need for a new point of departure for Jewry. The Adam of the title suffers biblical Adam's trauma in Mrs Siezling's Institute for Rehabilitation and Therapy as he learns that we cannot just have 'knowledge of good and evil' but must actually live good and evil.[3]

The many elements of the Garden story become transposed in

Jewish interpretations but still require reference to the biblical text in order to be fully comprehended: the Tree of Life becomes the Torah; the expulsion becomes the exile; the serpent becomes Samael or the evil inclination; and the curses can become blessings. The Garden of Eden can be the land of Israel, or the heavenly abode of the righteous after death, or the heavenly academy ('yeshivah on high'),[4] and 'tending' the garden becomes the study of Torah and the 'keeping' of the commandments.

These Genesis themes are woven into the texture of Jewish life and thought. The fourth of the seven blessings of the marriage ceremony recalls that God 'gladdened' the first couple's wedding (*Prayer Book*, p. 771)[5]. A wife lights the Sabbath candles as a task enjoined on her as an antidote to the 'curse of Eve' (*Gen. R.* 17.8). The laws governing the relationship between husbands and wives are likewise designed to overcome the same curse (Gen. 3.16; *b. Pes.* 72b). As Adam was born and judged on Rosh Ha-Shanah (New Year), so every Jew is judged on that day. The daily morning prayers begin with the hope of life to come in the Garden of Eden, the donning of the tallit (prayer shawl) symbolizing the future divine robe of the soul (*Prayer Book*, p. 3; cf. Ps. 36.8-11; *b. B. Mez.* 47a). And after the reading of the law in synagogue—the re-enactment of the giving of the Torah at Mount Sinai—the Torah Scroll is held up before the congregation, who proclaim, '*This* is the Torah which Moses set before the children of Israel. . . She is a Tree of Life to those who grasp her' (*Prayer Book*, p. 374).

There are a number of ways in which one might tackle the history of Jewish interpretations of Genesis 2 and 3. One might attempt an updated version of Louis Ginzberg's *The Legends of the Jews*, that is, a synthesized anthology of rabbinic (and in his case, other) exegesis, presented as a continuous narrative broadly following the biblical 'plot'.[6] Or the method of Vermes could be extended to trace the historical development of specific interpretations.[7] Alternatively, a verse-by-verse commentary could be constructed from the 'best' of the exegetical tradition. All these, however, are problematic in that they do not give due weight to the larger textual contexts in which the smaller interpretative units are located. I intend to focus on three historical modes of exegesis—the midrashic, the mystical and the philosophical—by examining a limited number of selected texts and authors. These selections have been governed by the significance of these modes and the persistence of two dominant themes in the literature—the Torah as an antidote to Adam's sin (the Torah as the Tree of Life) and the expulsion as exile.

2. *The Nature of Midrashic Exegesis*

'Write!' God replied (*Gen. R.* 8.8; *b. Sanh.* 38b).

The definition of 'midrash' is problematic in that the term has been used in different ways and in opposition to different terms, both within the tradition and by modern scholars.[8] By 'midrash', I refer to the central modes of rabbinic biblical exegesis, to the redacted collections of these textual interpretations and textually based homilies, and to the genre as a whole. The final compilations are, in the main, composed of discrete commentarial and homiletic units, usually of traceable independent origin, these elements subsequently being creatively and decisively structured, anthologized and edited to produce the rabbinical 'commentaries'. The major midrashic collections/texts were redacted from the fifth century CE to the thirteenth century, drawing on materials from the rabbinic academies of the land of Israel from the fall of Jerusalem to the demise of the land of Israel as a centre of Jewish intellectual activity. Although some of the midrashic material doubtless had its origins in oral public synagogue teaching, the level of assumed familiarity with the biblical text and the nature and complexity of many midrashim would suggest that the synagogue cannot be understood as the common origin of this genre of Jewish religious literature.

Midrashic exegesis is characterized by a fluidity and openness in interpretation. It is a free narrative interpretation of the biblical narrating. A principal feature of midrash is the possibility of the infinite generation of meanings. The limitless plurality of meaning is based on the methodological certainty that 'one biblical statement may carry many meanings' (*b. Sanh.* 34a) and, in fact, most midrashic expositions do offer a number of parallel and alternative interpretations of each biblical unit.

Midrash is 'tied' to the authoritative biblical text and proceeds by means of the most intimate relationship between the biblical text and its interpretation. This intimacy is informed by the features of the Hebrew language and particularly by the characteristics of Hebrew orthography. Orthographical structural features can, by a strange process of reversal, be read back into the biblical text. The generation of interpretations is based on the shape of the Hebrew letters, their consonantal-only form, written representations, the duality of Hebrew letters as number and consonant,[9] the scribal adornment of letters, the added vocalizations and musical notation system, word order, and ways of reading together the ends and beginnings of different words or sections. To these features are added the contextual and non-contextual significance of sound, letter, word, repetition, the attempts to resolve textual ambiguities at different levels, psychological considerations, theological questions, apparent contradictions, and, of course, the narrative conventions of biblical literature and the natural potentialities of the Hebrew language. It is important to note that midrashic interpretation operates, very often, simultaneously on a number of different levels, from a single letter to the whole biblical text.

The intimacy of the interpreter and the text as a whole leads to a series of multiple associations made between different biblical passages—often parts of a single verse (based on the above features)—highlighting both connections within the text and generating new links. The usage of words/elements in other biblical passages is constantly drawn upon in order to fathom the depths of the text at hand. A plurality of different usages is usually offered not as proof-texts for the assertion of a particular 'theological' point but as registers of the links and associations held to be 'within' the biblical text. Critics, rabbinic and modern, have reductionistically written off these procedures as wanton eisegesis rather than a different hermeneutic based on 'language' and canon. In this synchronic analysis, almost all the features noted by modern biblical critics, such as the different uses of the divine name, repetitions and stylistic factors, were registered, but understood as part of the richness and very nature of the biblical text. The processes of the literary creation of midrash are, it can be argued, similar to those that are intrinsic to the formation of the Hebrew Bible itself.[10]

Underlying these features is the authority of the biblical text; in fact, one might argue that it is this canonicity that creates the necessity of interpretation and its infinite generation. The biblical text is appreciated as a seamless whole and the divine intention manifest in every feature of the written text. Just after Moses has begun to write the Torah as given by God on Mount Sinai, he came to 'let *us* make. . . ' (Gen. 1.26) and asked God why he chose to generate difficulties and give ammunition to heretics. God replied 'Write!' The whole Torah (letters and even the spaces between them) is intentional and purposeful and its meanings are there to be discerned.

Midrashic exposition subscribes to a quite specific 'theory of language (biblical language/Hebrew)', in which the interconnectedness of the 'linguistic' elements of the canon allows for infinite cross-referring, as it were.[11] This 'language' level of analysis is the ground from which midrash almost always proceeds, albeit often by means of 'dubious' etymologies, synonyms and homonyms, rather than from the ideonic, metaphorical, or structural levels. This is not to suggest that these other levels are not evident, for the claim that midrash is a storehouse of older mythological materials, for example, is certainly correct, but that often these too are rooted in, and discovered in the biblical text, in terms of this analysis at the level of 'language'. The notion of the pre-existent Torah—the blueprint that God looked into before the creation (*Gen. R.* 1.1)—is also significant, in that the world-text and the Torah-text are identified. This entails that the Torah-text (revelation) contains everything within it if the interpreter just has the knowledge or sanctity to decipher (reveal) it.[12]

While it is unhelpful to isolate Greek/Hellenistic and Hebraic/rabbinic hermeneutical strategies and define them oppositionally,[13] and important to recognize that the rabbis made extensive use of Greek/Hellenistic interpretative modes, midrash does represent a rather different exegetical frame resting upon a profound playfulness and flexibility of the relationship between words and their constituent elements and their possible referents.

3. *Genesis Rabbah*

> 'He revealed deep and secret things' (Dan. 2.22). . . 'In the beginning He created the Heavens. . . ' But He did not interpret. . . When then did he interpret it? Later on. . . ' (*Gen. R.* 1.6).

Genesis Rabbah is a midrash organized on the basis of the Genesis text and the earliest rabbinic 'commentary' on the first book of the Torah. The text was the product of the rabbis of the land of Israel dating from the end of the fourth/beginning of the fifth century CE and except for a number of Aramaic sections is written in Hebrew.[14] The significance of *Genesis Rabbah* lies in its recognition as ***the*** ('canonical') midrash on Genesis as evidenced by the frequency of the quotation and citation of its constituent elements in later commentaries. The historical context of its 'redaction' was the political and cultural sea-change occasioned by the 'final triumph' of Christianity, necessitating a fundamental re-appraisal and re-statement of Jewish 'theology'—the import of the divine promise of a 'land', now lost; the destiny of the people Israel, now persecuted; and the meaning of the long-awaited redemption, now seemingly even more remote.

Although the structure of the text is arranged in verse, or verse-related, units, one can identify a series of implicit methodological discussions in the beginning sections, including the hidden nature of the meanings of the Genesis text,[15] the pre-creation existence of the Torah, and the dangers of expounding the 'mysteries of creation' (*Gen. R.* 1.10). The startling assertion is made (*Gen. R.* 1.6) that the meaning of the secrets of creation (the verses in Genesis, and, of course, the events) were not then (at that time, as it were) interpreted by God (i.e. in the biblical text) but require this later rabbinic exposition ('later on'). The claim that the meanings of a verse can only be known by means of its later exegesis is the very rationale for midrashic interpretation. Meaning is not 'original meaning' but only the meaning generated in the living history of the community of Israel as expounded by the sages of Israel.

The nature of midrashic literature makes summary or paraphrase not only difficult but rather pointless. Although there is no adequate substitute for reading the midrash alongside the biblical text, it is helpful to select a number of examples to illustrate something of the workings of midrashic exegesis. A number of underlying features of the text need to be noted before looking at the sections on the Garden story. A pattern is forged linking the precise details of creation of the world with the creation of Israel based on 'associated' biblical readings (for example, of the word 'created') to establish that Israel (like the Torah) was pre-existent and that the world was created only for Israel and Torah (*Gen. R.* 1.4, 10). This pattern generates a series of parallels between the 'textual/historical' and the 'natural'.[16] The very structures of creation are reflected and repeated in the patterns of Israel's history, Israel's history *and* human history,[17] the creation of the natural world and Jewish religious life,[18] sin and punishment,[19] and creation and redemption.[20]

The word 'historical' to describe these series is a little misleading—although they are, in fact, of course, chronological lists—in that, in *Genesis Rabbah*, the dominant notion of time is as a sort of divinely ordained procession of ahistorical events (a collapsed time), which only appears to be historical until recognized (interpreted) as the structures of providence, inherent in creation, itself. This notion of 'generations' or series provides one of the interpretative frames of the *Genesis Rabbah* account of the meanings of the biblical text.

The creation is programmatically repeated starting with the account in the first chapter of Genesis; with Adam in ch. 2; with the birth of Cain and Abel; with Noah; with Abraham; and again with Isaac and Jacob. Human history begins with Adam, and again with Noah; Israel's history with Abraham, and with Jacob/Israel (Jacob is identified with Eden and the Temple, *Gen. R.* 65.22). Sin/evil commences with the snake; with Cain; with the generations between Adam and the Flood; and with Esau. These 'histories' of repetitions are focused on the punishment of exiles and the overcoming of such punishment ('returns')—Israel's sin and exile are a reiteration of Adam's sin and exile—and are traced through to Edom/Esau/Rome, that is, to then contemporary times.

Aspects of the Genesis Garden narrative provide the first in the series of a whole host of such series—the first commandment, temptation, sin, punishment, curse and exile. The word 'Adam' as both 'man(kind)' and the name of the first man, proves particularly amenable to the midrashic intertextual reading of other biblical verses. The climax of all these sequences is the giving of the Torah, and, through Israel's observance of its commandments, the possibility of the redemption as the ultimate remedy for all creation and the fulfilment of God's original purpose. These overlapping series are endlessly developed, reflecting the structure of the biblical text and the creation of 'new' structures—although often these reflect the attempt by the rabbis to defend one midrashic interpretation over another rather than a concern with novel exegeses. These structures, of course, are not limited to the text and interpretation of Genesis but extend into the other biblical books. For example, Cain and Abel, Jacob and Esau, Joseph and his brothers, and finally the relationship (resolution?) between Moses and Aaron, create a repetition of the 'brothers' theme. In a sense all these repetition-series are versions of the meta-narratives of creation, revelation (Torah) and redemption.

The authors of the midrashic interpretation of the Genesis narrative explicate a number of topics, including the nature of Adam (and Eve) before and after his/their sin,[21] and the limits and extents of the ways in which 'Adam' is like and unlike God.[22] The rabbis ask a series of gap-filling questions: what 'work' could man do in the Garden given that all was provided for him? What was the snake like before being cursed? Why was the approach made to Eve and not Adam?[23] Why was the ground cursed?[24] Why was the creation of woman done ('in secret') when Adam slept? Where was Adam during the conversation between Eve and the serpent?[25] What tree was the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil?[26] As animals die, did they too eat of the Tree?[27] Were Adam and Eve blind before 'their eyes were opened'?[28] What exactly was Adam's sin? Eve's? the snake's?[29] Why didn't they 'surely die' upon eating of the Tree?[30] How can the 'on that day' be reconciled with Adam's obviously longer life?[31] How can God 'walk' around in the afternoon?[32] Why did God address Adam, and Eve, but not the serpent?[33] What are the implications of God's curses?[34] Did God not offer the opportunity of repentance?[35] And so it goes on.

They want to know, for example, why 'aprons'[36] is in the plural and the word 'formed' has a double letter 'Y'.[37] They ask what is the significance of the 'cool of the afternoon'[38] and by way of explanation, for example, they note that the letter 'S' does not appear in connection with man until the creation of woman;[39] that there are seventy-one mentions of God's name until the serpent's curse;[40] and that there are word-plays on 'earth'/'Adam', *ish/ishah*, and 'Eve'/'snake'.[41] They derive lessons concerning the structure of rabbinic law,[42] the import of marriage,[43] the viability of foetuses,[44] making a living,[45] resurrection,[46] etc. They link Adam to Abraham,[47] Moses, and Job;[48] and Eve to Sarah, Rachel and Dinah.[49]

There are three interrelated themes that dominate the midrashic account of the biblical narrative. First, on the basis of the establishment of the link between the creation and the Garden plot, Adam is then identified with Israel:

> It is written 'But they like Adam (men) have transgressed the covenant' (Hos. 6.7). They are like men, in particular, the first man. 'I brought the first man to the Garden of Eden (Gen. 2.15), I commanded him (2.16) but he broke my commandment (3.11). I sentenced him to be. . . driven out (3.23), but I grieved for him, saying 'How. . . ' (*Gen. R.* 3.9).[50]

Israel's story is seen as a direct parallel to Adam's:

> The same is for his descendants. I brought them to the Land of Israel (Jer. 2.7), I commanded them (Lev. 24.2), but they broke my commandment (Dan. 9.11). I sentenced them to be. . . driven out (Jer. 15.1), but I grieved for them, saying 'How. . . ' (Lam. 1.1) (*Gen. R.* 19.9).

Secondly, the 'theological' implications of Adam's sin for Israel and humankind are radically developed (based on the exegesis of the verb 'to walk' read as 'leaped', 'ascended'; see *Gen. R.* 19.13) in terms of a series tracing the exile, not of Adam, but of the *Shekhinah* (divine presence):

> The primary place of the *Shekhinah* was to be with the creatures below. When the first man sinned, the *Shekhinah* moved up to the first heaven. Then Cain sinned and She moved up to the second heaven. And when the generation of Enosh sinned, She moved up to the third heaven. Then the generation of the Flood sinned and She moved up to the fourth heaven. When the generation of the dispersion (Babel) sinned, She moved up to the fifth heaven. Because of those of Sodom, She moved up to the sixth heaven. And because of the Egyptians in Abraham's day, She moved up to the seventh heaven.

Here, Adam's sin begins a series of the estrangement of the divine presence from the created world that shapes biblical history. The antidote to this alienation can only be the 'seven righteous men' who 'brought the *Shekhinah* back down to earth':

> Abraham brought her from the seventh heaven to the sixth, Isaac brought Her from the sixth to the fifth. Jacob brought Her from the fifth to the fourth and Levi brought Her from the fourth to the third. Then Kahath brought Her from the third to the second and Amram brought Her from the second to the first. Moses brought Her down to earth (*Gen. R.* 19.7).

Adam's sin can only be countered by Moses and the giving of the Torah, and the purpose of the sacred biblical 'history' of Israel is to overcome the 'wicked' who stopped the *Shekhinah* 'from dwelling on the earth' (*Gen. R.* 19.7).

Finally, there is the related theme of the eventual redemption of Israel as the ultimate overcoming of the sin of Adam (*Gen. R.* 21.1). While Adam was given but one commandment but failed to observe it, Israel has been given the 613 commandments of the Torah and keeps them.[51] While Adam consigned his descendants to the 'flaming sword' (Gen. 3.24, identified with Gehenna) and denied them the Tree of Life, the Torah will 'save' Adam's descendants and enable them to participate in the eternal life of the final redemption (*Gen. R.* 21.9).

Adam also represents the progenitor of humankind and thus the ground for the universal claims of the rabbis—as Adam was created in God's likeness so 'This is the *Book of the Generations of Adam*—all humankind is made in the likeness of God' (*Gen. R.* 24.7). All humankind is bound by God's commandments given to Adam and Noah. This Torah is understood in two distinct ways—pre-Sinai, as the Torah for all (including Israel), *and* post-Sinai, as the Torah for the Gentiles. These commandments represent for some interpreters a rabbinic version of natural law, although there are disputes as to whether these codes are binding only under Jewish rule or universally, or the precise nature of their halakhic status.[52] This 'Torah for the Gentiles' usually contains the seven commandments held to have been given to Noah (the Noahite or Noahide laws—'the seven commandments of the sons of Noah').[53] These were (at least six and often all seven), it is contended, revealed to Adam in the first explicit divine commandment given to man.[54] The passage in *Genesis Rabbah* on Gen. 2.16[55] offers a fascinating example of midrash.

The text of the first commandment (Gen. 2.16) is as follows:

> And the Lord God commanded the man, saying: Of every tree of the Garden you may eat freely (*Vayezav YHVH Elohim al-ha-Adam lemor mikol ez-ha-gan akhol tokhel*).

Text of Gen. R. *16.6*	*Commentary*
R. Levi said: He obliged him to keep six commandments.	
(1) He commanded against *idolatry*—'Because he willingly walked after idols' (Hos. 5.11).	*Vayezav* (commanded) in the biblical verse is linked to the word *zav* (commandment) in Hosea, which is held there to refer to (*avodah zarah*) idolatry.[56]
(2) 'The Lord' (YHVH) signals a commandment against *blasphemy*—'And he who blasphemes the name of the Lord' (Lev. 24.16).	Here the Leviticus verse is taken literally as 'And he who blasphemes the *name* of the Lord'.
(3) 'God' (Elohim) signals a commandment concerning *the establishment of law courts*—'Elohim you shall not curse' (Exod. 22.28).	The word 'Elohim' means gods, idols, or judges. Here the Exodus verse is read as 'Judges you shall not curse'.[57]
(4) '. . . the man (*ha-Adam*)' refers to the prohibition of *murder*—'Whoever sheds a man's blood (*dam ha-adam*)' (Gen. 9.6).	The midrash takes the *al* (on, or about) in 2.16 in accordance with other usages to read it as 'concerning man' and not limited to Adam (and Eve).[58]

(5) '. . . saying (*lemor*)' refers to the prohibition of *illicit sexual relations*—'If a man put away his wife' (Jer. 3.1).	*Lemor* introduces the verse from Jeremiah, where in the context the reference is to unfaithfulness.[59]
(6) 'Of every tree you may eat freely' (Gen. 2.16) signals that he commanded against *theft*.	Things not granted must not be taken.

Other versions, for example that found in *Gen. R.* 34.8, extend the list to include the seventh law.[60] Although the next passage in *Gen. R.* 16.6 questions whether all these can, in fact, be found in Gen. 2.16 and suggests that only blasphemy is certain, the tradition developed that the midrashic exegesis of the first commandment entailed the universal code of humankind.[61]

4. *Dabar Aher: (and now for) Another Interpretation*

There are a number of other major midrashic 'commentaries' that develop the above themes within the frameworks of their different contexts. We tend to find, however, that alternative interpretations are rarely given and that a continuous 'midrashic narrative' is offered. The purpose here is not to review this extensive literature but to alert the reader to some of the major texts and themes.

The Fathers according to Rabbi Nathan,[62] a midrashic commentary (or commentaries—there are two major versions) on the mishnaic tractate, *Abot*, offers an interpretation of Gen. 2.16 and 3.16 in its exegesis of *Abot* 1.1 ('make a fence around the Torah').[63] Adam is assigned the blame for making an excessive fence (only Adam received the commandment in Gen. 2.16) in his relaying of God's law to Eve, resulting in the undermining of all the first man's words to his mate. There is also the note that God must bear some of the responsibility as it was he who raised their interest in the fateful tree (*ARN* 1.13). Divine and rabbinic responsibility for the 'lowly' and exilic condition of Israel provides part of the interpretation of the text as a whole.

Pirke de-Rabbi Eliezer,[64] a midrashic text, presents a free re-narration of the biblical books of Genesis and Exodus. Five chapters are devoted to the interpretation of the Adam and Eve narrative. The Garden story is set as the first of a series of divine descents beginning at Eden and ending with the future redemption (*PRE* 16). Here we find many of the themes of *Genesis Rabbah* and other sources but set in a collection of thematically arranged sections. So, for example, the creation of Eve (*PRE* 18) is related to the 'eve' of the Sabbath, the time of her creation, and the first couples' choice linked to the 'two ways' (Deut. 30.15—'life and death') (*PRE* 15). It also offers an elaborate account of Samael (Satan) and the celestial conspiracy against Adam,[65] evidencing a concern with both Gnostic theories and countering the claims of Islam.

Further elaborations of the Genesis text are to be found in *Tanna de-bei Eliyyahu*,[66] *Pesikta Rabbati*,[67] *Tanḥuma*,[68] *Pesikta de-Rab Kahana*[69] and others.[70]

5. *Kabbalistic Interpretations of Adam's Sin*

The Secret of the Word (*Zohar* 1.237a).

The dominance of midrashic modes of exegesis became in time overshadowed by two largely discrete developments that took definitive form in the twelfth century and came to determine the shape of subsequent Jewish religious thought—kabbalah and 'Jewish rationalism', most clearly evidenced in Jewish philosophy. Both transformed the dominant modes of biblical exegesis and the nature of Jewish culture itself. Jewish philosophy (excluding Philo) developed in tenth-century Babylonia, although the origins of Jewish rationalism were earlier.[71] The attempt by Jewish thinkers to reconcile the Arabic interpretations of Greek physics and metaphysics with the rabbinic tradition became a major intellectual force in the Arabic-speaking Jewish world in the eleventh and twelfth centuries, reaching its zenith with the *Guide of the Perplexed* of Maimonides (1135–1204). The twelfth century saw the dissemination of the *Guide* and other major texts in Hebrew translation presenting Jewish scholars with new challenges.[72] Although mystical interpretations of the *Guide* did appear in the thirteenth century, developments in the Jewish mystical tradition were, in the main, independent of those in Jewish philosophy.[73] Jewish rationalism was widespread both in terms of the influence of formal Jewish philosophies and, perhaps more importantly, as a more general tendency towards the rationalistic refashionings of the Jewish tradition. I will return below to a number of issues pertaining to the rationalistic exegesis of the Garden text.

The Jewish mystical movement known as kabbalah has its origins in the interpretations of the earlier merkabah and creation traditions; *Sefer Ha-Bahir* (*The Book of Brilliance*); the German Jewish school of pietists (*Hasidei Ashkenaz*); and the mystical schools of Gerona and other centres in Spain and France. The principal text of kabbalah is *Sefer Ha-Zohar* (*The Book of Splendour*), a 'mystical biblical commentary' which made its appearance in the thirteenth century.[74] Kabbalistic interpretation utilizes particular symbolic systems as the interpretative frameworks for its exegesis. The most notable of these is the *sefirotic* system of the ten divine emanations that structure the divine and mundane worlds.[75] The *sefirot* system gave rise to a vast and complex array of symbols that sought to record and reflect the dynamic interactions of the sefirot.

Kabbalistic biblical exegesis shares many of the characteristics of midrashic exegesis and draws heavily on midrashic texts. The intentions are different, however, in that the aim is to read Scripture (primarily Hebrew Bible but including authoritative rabbinic and earlier mystical texts) as a series of symbolic accounts of the interplays between the ten *sefirot*. These symbolic accounts are divine in origin and represent the secret/mystical meanings of the biblical text. Every element of the text, as in midrashic exegesis, is significant in the attempt to re-read the written text as the divinely revealed repository of mystical symbols in order to reveal the concealed secrets of the *sefirotic* realms. Kabbalah offers a polyvalent symbolic system where there is no direct correlation between a symbol and a particular *sefirah*—these equivalences change dynamically according to context, so that, for example, elements within the Garden story (e.g. 'God', Adam, Eve, the two trees, the serpent) can each symbolically represent different *sefirot* and different relationships between them. Events in the divine realm affect the earthly domain—when there is harmony between the *sefirot* 'above' all is well 'below'. But the processes are two-way and harmony 'below' ensures peace 'above' (*Zohar* 2.144a).

Kabbalistic texts often contend both that Adam was the first 'receiver' of kabbalah, the timeless mystical truths,[76] and that Adam's sin is of the greatest import in symbolizing the disjunction of the primordial unity of the *sefirot* that affected the whole development of the creative process including the appearance of the material world, the (mis)appreciation of the nature of God and the growth of the powers of evil.[77] The intention here is not to trace the extensive deliberations of the kabbalists on the meanings of Genesis 2 and 3, but to highlight a number of pertinent themes.

There are a number of diverse strands within the kabbalistic tradition and before looking at the *Zohar* I will briefly look at two examples of pre-*Zohar* kabbalistic accounts of the Genesis narrative. The meaning of Adam's sin became a major theme for this interpretative tradition and these earlier kabbalists offer a number of alternative accounts to the *Zoharic* traditions which became determinative for later Jewish mystical thought.

The beginning of the thirteenth century saw the establishment of a circle of kabbalists in Gerona. Among the members of this disparate group were Rabbi Moses ben Nahman and Rabbi Azriel (of Gerona). These two offer very different accounts of the implications of Adam's 'sin'.[78] In general these accounts are less guarded than the 'secret' of the *Zohar* and a brief consideration of their understandings of Adam's sin both suggests alternate interpretative possibilities and sheds light on the *Zoharic* exegesis.

As in the *Zohar*, many of the early kabbalists understood that before Adam's sin there was as yet no material world at all (a view incidentally shared by many of the Jewish rationalists). Adam was a wholly spiritual being and his exile from the upper world represents the beginnings of corporeal existence (often indicated by the homonym of 'skin' for 'light' as in the garments provided by God in the Genesis narrative; see *Gen. R.* 20.12; *Zohar* 1.36b; 2.229b). The resulting breach of unity in the divine realm—the divorce between *Tiferet* and *Malkhut*, symbolizing the breach between the male and female aspects of the Godhead—gives rise to the human mission of restoring the harmony and love between these two *sefirot*, thus restoring Adam to his original condition (the primordial Adam of Gen. 1.26). Further, unlike midrashic texts where the people Israel come to replace Adam, as it were, this original condition of the first man is given a soteriological reading—as the kabbalist's goal. The original human condition prior to Adam's sin—a perfect communion with God (the higher *sefirot*)—can be recovered by the individual kabbalist (potentially, of course, by all Israel) in the ecstatic experience of *devekut* (cleaving to God). The mystical path is a return to the Garden of Eden as (in the place of) Adam.

Rabbi Azriel calculates that in the two thousand years between the creation of the original 'spiritual'/'heavenly'/'higher' Torah (identified with the *sefirah Hokhmah*) and the creation of our Torah and the physical world (cf. *Gen. R.* 1.1) there were 974 generations during which Adam (the *sefirah Keter*) and Eve (the *sefirah Hokhmah*) and their descendants (the *sefirah Binah*) existed in a purely spiritualized state. Adam's spiritual form was under the governance of the *sefirah Binah*. The three, as yet emanated, *sefirot* (*Keter*, *Hokhmah* and *Binah*) of this primordial condition were in perfect harmony (*shlemut*) both as a divine unity of all potentiality and with the 'created' order (Adam whose three types of soul were identified with the three existing *sefirot*).

In this perfect condition all was united in these higher levels of divinity; all potential 'will' was united and subordinated to the divine will and all distinctions were potential and indistinct in *Keter* (or *Ein-Sof*) and Adam's 'will' was merely one of the potentialities.[79]

Adam's exercise of his 'actualized' individual 'will' (his sin) broke apart the *shlemut* and marked the failure, as it were, of the original divine plan. Adam's sin and his 're-creation' as a physical being correspond to the emanation of the seven lower *sefirot* reflecting the new divine plan and order for creation, and these seven are in turn reflected in our 'mundane' Torah (the 'lower' Torah, the biblical record). Adam's sin, therefore, not only resulted in his own physicality (a body now governed by the *sefirot*, *gevurah* and *hesed*) but in the entire differentiated physical world and the actualization of the divine powers (the seven lower *sefirot*) appropriate to this 'lower' world.[80]

According to Azriel, the mystic must totally subordinate his individual 'will', divorce his soul from his body and cleave to *Keter* (or *Hokhmah*) in the mystical ascent of his soul, thus overcoming Adam's sin and restoring his (the individual kabbalist's) spiritual condition in the *shlemut* of the highest *sefirot*. Although Azriel stresses the soteriological dimension, he also develops a messianic eschatology with a purely spiritualized messiah as the counterpart of original Adam heralding the fulfilment of the original divine plan.[81]

Rabbi Moses ben Nahman (Ramban, Nahmanides, 1194–1270), the noted talmudist, was the first major commentator to include kabbalistic materials in his biblical commentary, albeit in a veiled fashion. He also alludes to and challenges philosophical interpretations, particularly those of Maimonides, and opposes those such as Azriel who radically spiritualize Adam.[82]

Nahmanides considers that the inconsistencies in the Genesis narrative clearly indicate that beneath the exoteric there is an esoteric level of interpretation[83] and he often utilizes midrashic exegesis as the vital link to the deeper, hidden truth. The surface level presents us with many difficulties, such as that our post-curse world does not include talking snakes and yet the snake is not cursed with dumbness; the knowledge of good and evil—the ability to choose between right and wrong—must be one of the boons of creation and yet it appears that God had not intended to grant humankind this necessary foundation of morality; Adam *and* Eve are obviously capable of choice *before* their fateful choice of the forbidden fruit and what can be wrong with the desire to 'be wise' and a fruit that was 'good to eat'? These and other difficulties are resolved at the esoteric level of interpretation.

The Eden story pertains to the earthly ('lower') and divine ('upper') worlds (*Commentary* on Gen. 3.22). It is the account of the fulfilment of the divine plan and conveys great secrets concerning the true nature of man. Adam (Gen. 1.26) was created as a 'spirit-body' (*Commentary* on Gen. 1.26; see also on 2.3, 7, 9), that is as a body where the *nefesh* ('spirit') dominates the *guf* ('body'). This 'spiritual Adam' dwelt as an eternal being in the 'World-To-Come' (*Olam Ha-Ba*)—an abode where all ten *sefirot* are completely revealed—in the closest intimacy with the divine powers, subsisting on divine 'manna'. In this pre-'Fall' state Adam was simply part of nature and like other created/emanated elements he merely acted automatically without choice or independent will (*Commentary* on Gen. 2.9). The *Shekhinah* was inert, as it were, within Adam's spirit-body. If this is so, how can Adam have sinned? For Nahmanides the revolutionary answer is that Adam did not in fact sin at all.

'Spiritual Adam's' counterpart ('bone of his bones'), 'Spiritual Eve', 'is' the *Shekhinah* which reflects the light of the higher *sefirot*. 'Spiritual Adam' and 'Spiritual Eve' (*Shekhinah*) were part of the divine world (*Commentary* on 2.20, 23). Enter the serpent, who 'is' Samael, the servant and messenger of the *sefirah* Din (*Commentary* on Gen. 1.31; *Shaar*, p. 296). The *Shekhinah* is tempted by Samael and acquires/receives will and desire, as does 'Spiritual Adam' (*Commentary* on Gen. 3.6, 12).

'Spiritual Adam' also symbolizes the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil and as such is identified with the *sefirah Yesod*. And the *Shekhinah* symbolizes the garden (and its fruit) (*Shaar*, pp. 296ff.). Drawing on the midrashic reading of Gen. 3.3 where the prohibition is read as Adam's sexual desire for Eve (*Pirke de-Rabbi Eliezer* cited, *Shaar*, p. 296), Nahmanides interprets the 'eating' as the union of the *Shekhinah* with *Yesod*. Thus the prohibition when understood correctly is not a commandment at all. This union of 'Spiritual Adam and Eve' led to the separation of these spiritual beings from their earthly counterparts, that is the physical creation of Adam and Eve (*Commentary* on Gen. 2.17; 3.13). These earthly beings were endowed with the free will/desire of the divine counterparts. The 'curses' represent God's decree for an order appropriate for physical beings endowed with free will and the possibility of cleaving to God and recognizing him. Kabbalistically the curses are 'blessings'; for example, the cursed serpent represents our power over the *Yezer Ha-Ra*; it is the serpent within the *Shekhinah*/Eve that is cursed so that the 'pain of childbirth' is the union of *Tiferet* and the *Shekhinah*, and Eve's desire for her husband is that of the *Shekhinah* for *Tiferet* (*Commentary* on Gen. 3.15-16).

Nahmanides rejects the accepted midrashic interpretation of 'the voice of God walking in the Garden' (Gen. 3.8) as the withdrawal (as a result of sin, *Gen. R.* 19.7) of the *Shekhinah* (*Commentary* on Gen. 3.8). He interprets this 'walking' as the now-separated *Shekhinah* revealing herself to the 'physical' couple, offering them the possibility of spiritual development (*devekut*) and thus marking the beginning of human life. Through the events of the Eden story the original divine plan is effected and the stage set for the human couple endowed with free will and the possibilities of religious progress.[84]

Adam is specifically not charged with the usual kabbalist charge of 'cutting the shoots' (the foundation of all 'cardinal' sins), that is, separating the *Shekhinah* from the other *sefirot* (specifically Tiferet). Nahmanides accepts this separation but contends that the sin is the *Shekhinah's* and part of the divine plan.[85]

As with Azriel of Gerona, the understanding of the Garden story presents the kabbalist with his mystic path. The aim is to recover the spirit-body of 'Spiritual Adam' (*Commentary* on Deut. 30.6). Nahmanides understands *devekut* with the *Shekhinah* to be akin to 'divine grace',[86] that is, as a gift bestowed on the spirit-body of the adept after the requisite preparation[87]—the body 'becomes an abode for the *Skehinah*'.[88] This soteriology is linked to an eschatology based on the progressive ascent and transformation of the physical world to the highest spiritual levels—the pre-messianic world is governed by the seven lower *sefirot*, the messianic world by the eighth, *Binah*, and after the final judgment and the resurrection of the dead, the 'World-To-Come' by all ten.

The *Zohar* is most reticent of the nature of Adam's sin and only alludes to the significance of this great secret. In *Midrash Ha-Ne'elman* (*Zohar Ḥadash*), the earliest strata of the *Zohar* corpus of texts,[89] we learn that the biblical text of Genesis deliberately obscures the monstrous secret of Adam's sin. Rabbi Shimon bar Yohai relates his conversation with Adam: the first man 'asked that his sin not be revealed to the whole world beyond what the Torah had said concerning it'. The true nature of the great sin is 'concealed in that tree in the Garden of Eden' (*Zohar Ḥadash, Bereshit,* 19a). In this section—drawing on the two earlier traditions that Adam was guilty of the sin of heresy (cf. *Gen. R.* 19.3) and that as a result of this sin the *Shekhinah* is exiled (cf. *Gen. R.* 19.7)—a kabbalistic interpretation of these accounts is developed. The *sefirot* are revealed to Adam as the two Edenic trees. The Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil and the Tree of Life are united in a harmonious relationship ('the Tree in the midst of the Garden'). The Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil symbolizes the *Shekhinah* and the Tree of Life, the *sefirah Tiferet.* The result of Adam's sin is to have effected a 'divorce' (cf. *Gen. R.* 21.8, 9; *T. d. Eliy.* 4.1 where 'drove out' [Gen. 3.24] is read as 'divorced' [as in Deut. 24.1 where the ex-wife is driven out]) between the two trees, separating them and giving them distinct existences—a divorce between the *Shekhinah* (the *sefirah Malkhut*) and Tiferet.[90] Another passage reads:

> come and see the secret of the Word: Adam was caught by his very sin. He brought death upon himself and the whole world. He caused that Tree with which he sinned to be divorced, to be driven away with him, to be driven away with his children forever—'he drove out *et* Adam' (*Zohar* 1.237a).

This notion of the divorce of the *Shekhinah* is given a radical interpretation in yet another section:

> Rabbi Elazar said, 'We do not know who divorced who, if the Holy One Blessed Be He divorced Adam or not. But the word is transposed: He drove out *et*. *Et* indeed. And who drove out *et*? Adam. Adam drove out *et*. Thus it is written: 'YHVH Elohim drove him out from the Garden of Eden'. Why did He expel him? Because Adam drove out *et*. . . (*Zohar* 1.53b).

Here the accusative particle (*et*), which legitimately might be considered as unnecessary, is read as referring to the *Shekhinah*. Adam and Eve are exiled from the Garden; the *Shekhinah* is exiled/divorced from Adam and Eve and the *Shekhinah* is divorced/exiled from *Tiferet*. Adam's sin was the worship of the *Shekhinah* alone, divorcing her from the Tree of Life (*Tiferet*) and the other *sefirot* (the 'cardinal' sin of 'cutting the shoots'; see *Zohar* 1.12a-b, 35b-36a, 221a-b; 3.182a, 240a). He misperceived the nature of the Godhead and took the *Shekhinah* to be the Godhead itself (this is the esoteric meaning of the commandment not to 'eat' of the Tree of Knowledge, that is, not to 'cleave' to the *Shekhinah* alone).

The exile of *Shekhinah* symbolizes both the divorce of Adam from the *Shekhinah*, and the *Shekhinah* from *Tiferet* (referred to in a number of ways, for example, as the separation of the 'King' from the 'Queen' [*Matronita*]). *Adam's sin generates the disruption within the Godhead itself* (*Zohar* 1.57b). This disruption blocks the world's redemption and interrupts and distorts the divine flow from the higher *sefirot*, fragmenting all existence. Post-sin Adam finds the lost *Shekhinah* of the Garden of Eden and both are 'driven out into exile'. The human task is to 'put Humpty-Dumpty back together again', as it were, to re-unite the *Shekhinah* with *Tiferet* (and thereby with the other *sefirot*) and re-establish the divine flow within the *sefirot*. As the earthly community of Israel is modelled on the *Shekhinah* who symbolizes the 'upper' community of Israel, the performance of the commandments and the study of the Torah and prayer, indeed the entire religious life of Israel in the world 'below', are directed towards the fulfilment of this sacred task.

The original human androgynous condition was lost by Adam's sin (*Zohar* 3.43b, 117a; cf. *Gen. R.* 8.1) and his descent into the realm of the physical resulted in the letters of the Torah becoming corporeal, giving rise to a particular set of narratives—a corruption that continued until Sinai (*Zohar* 1.55b-56a)—only the redemption will bring the revelation of a new Torah and bring the corruption of language to an end.

The implications of Adam's sin are momentous in that the separation of the *Shekhinah* left her unprotected from 'penetration' by the forces of the 'other side' (evil). The breach in the harmonious union of the two Edenic Trees has resulted in the evil, originally inherent in the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and *Evil*, becoming activated and manifest as the evil inclination (*yetzer ha-ra*).[91] The *Shekhinah* rules the post-sin world governed by the 'other' tree, the Tree of Death (*Zohar* 1.35b, 52a-b, 221a-b; 2.48b).[92] Death was inert within the Tree of Life while it was in union with the Tree of Knowledge, but the separation of the two trees transforms the Tree of Life into the Tree of Death.[93]

As in the midrashic accounts, the *Zohar* presents the Torah and the observance of its commandments as the antidote to Adam's sin. A distinction is often made between the Torah of the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil (the Torah [of the exile] of the duality of good and evil, the forbidden and the permitted—the *halakhah*) and the Torah of the Tree of Life (kabbalah). The secret Torah of the Tree of life is identified with Moses' first two tablets and the Torah of the Tree of Knowledge with the second set (*Zohar* 1.26b). In our exilic condition, Israel (post-Adam's sin) is bound by the Torah of the Tree of Knowledge, except for the mystics who have access to the Tree of Life and who are actively working for the redemption. At the redemption all Israel will be bound by the Tree of Life.

The commandments have hidden implications and their fulfilment mystically effects the union of the separated *sefirot*. The ten commandments represent the ten *sefirot* (*Zohar* 2.93b) and the six hundred and thirteen symbolize and structure the entire universe—each linked to the six hundred and thirteen elements of the body of *Adam Kadmon* (the universe in the image of the primordial man; see *Zohar* 2.85b)—'for all the commandments are joints and limbs in the image of Adam, they all contribute to the mystery of unification' (*Zohar* 2.162b). The observance of the commandments strengthens the powers of good in their struggle with the forces of the 'other side' and more importantly re-establishes the union and harmony of the *sefirot* (in particular, the union of the male and female elements):

> The deed above is invoked by the deed below. If a man performs a deed below correctly, a power is invoked correctly in the world above (*Zohar* 3.92a-b; cf. 1.77b, 86b; 3.38b).

Before fulfilling a commandment later kabbalists would recite:

> For the purpose of uniting the Holy One, Blessed Be He, with His *Shekhinah* (cf. *Zohar* 2.119a).[94]

As in the midrashic accounts above, where the understanding of Adam's sin determines the nature of the Torah as antidote, so in the *Zohar* we find the radical reading of Adam's sin as the disruption of the harmony and fragmentation of the Godhead itself to be matched by an equally radical notion of the Torah as antidote:

> He who fulfils the commandments of the Torah and walks in God's path *creates* him, as it were, in the world above (*Zohar* 3.113a).

In post-*Zoharic* kabbalah there are a number of developments in the interpretation of the Garden story.[95]

6. *Peshat and Derash*

> Frequently one midrash contradicts another (but). . . the words of Torah are never less than clear (Ibn Ezra, *Introduction, Commentary on the Torah*).

The relationship of midrashic 'exegesis' to the biblical text was deemed problematic by a number of the rabbis of the Talmud and of the midrashic sources themselves. Alongside the growth of mystical and kabbalistic modes there developed 'Jewish rationalistic' modes of the interpretation of the Hebrew Bible. I am using the term 'Jewish rationalism' to refer to the rise of grammatical, apologetic and specifically philosophical approaches to the biblical text.

The controversy generated by the Karaite sectarians, and the claims of Christians and Muslims, all took their toll on midrashic hermeneutics. Islamic and Karaite, and, later, Christian scholars attacked midrashic interpretations of Scripture. By way of reaction, and as part of their cultural milieu, some Jewish writers stressed the plain, grammatical reading of Scripture, although almost always engaging in some degree of allegorical reading of the biblical texts to discern their 'inner' meaning.[96] Some used similar techniques to allegorize midrashic and other materials in an apologetic fashion. Most commentators, it should be noted, were in fact most positive about particular midrashic interpretations but sought to justify them in new terms. While the Karaites represented an 'internal' threat, as it were, Jewish scholars familiar with Christian exegesis generally found it as bizarre as anything propounded in midrashic sources. But it was the study of grammar by Muslim writers, and the development of comparative Semitic philology that led Jewish scholars back to the Hebrew of the biblical text and the creation of a 'new' hermeneutic of the 'plain meaning' of Scripture.[97]

Jewish exegetes were faced with particular interpretative problems. The preservation of the 'literal' meaning of biblical texts was essential as the foundation of the *halakhah* (contra-Christianity) and yet a strict literalism undermined the rabbinic tradition (contra-Karaism). And philosophical challenges entailed justifying both in terms of reason and the knowledge of the senses. Jewish thinkers felt acutely both the lack of a traditional conceptual apparatus of even the most basic religious notions and 'revealed' contradictions, such as anthropomorphisms.

The rise of the search for the *peshat* (plain meaning) of the biblical text and the ensuing debates concerning the relationship between *peshat* and *derash* (midrashic interpretation) often, however, led to the enshrining of midrash within the historical Jewish textual tradition and consciousness. Although the distinction between *peshat* and *derash* is of considerable importance in the history of Jewish biblical exegesis, it is distorting to understand it as an issue apart from the cultural milieu of the exegetes concerned. What is important to recognize is that from the tenth century, new hermeneutics came to replace the midrashic modes. Although midrashic collections continued to be compiled and the association between the biblical text and its midrashic readings was almost assumed—so much so, that they came to be contested—the old hermeneutic was lost. The essential plurality of interpretations ('the words of Torah are never less than clear') was exchanged for philosophical reconstructions based on allegorical reinterpretations which replaced or existed alongside the literal meanings.

Scriptural studies drawing on the analysis of grammar and the reexamination of the biblical text in the face of challenges to the inherited traditions of rabbinic interpretation developed within a particular 'culture'. This Jewish intellectual culture was informed by (mediaeval) rationalism (of which grammar and apologetics were part), both in terms of the development of specific Jewish philosophies (Jewish 'Kalam', Neoplatonism, Aristotelianism) and as a more general rationalizing tendency evident even in the most ardent Jewish rabbinic critics of philosophy. The permeation of Jewish culture by a new world-view (in fact, of course, world-views) entailed the wholesale reconstruction of Judaism along 'rational' lines.[98] Particular conceptions of nature, man and God became crystallized and questions of 'logic' were applied to Jewish sources, such as the compatibility of knowledge derived from the senses with that received from the tradition—with the explicit or implicit use of reason to decide such questions. Hermeneutically, one of the manifestations of this reconstruction was to discern the 'inner' meaning of scriptural passages, beneath, as it were, the 'plain' meaning—this 'inner' meaning rendering Scripture in accord with requirements of the then dominant rationalism.[99] The events in Eden as narrated in the Genesis narrative raised specific problems in terms of a rationalist world-view and were apt to be interpreted allegorically.

The usual general classification of mediaeval biblical commentators is as either *peshtanim* (e.g. Ibn Ezra,[100] Rashbam,[101] Sforno,[102] Kimhi[103]), or *darshanim* (e.g. Hizzekuni,[104] Jacob ben Asher[105]) according to the dominance of the interpretative mode utilized. The single most prominent mediaeval Jewish interpreter, Rashi, sought to effect some combination of the two approaches.[106] This classification is useful if we note that representatives of both groups, especially the *peshtanim*, presented their exegeses within the framework of a mediaeval rationality. It must be recognized, however, that combinations of the rational, philosophical and kabbalistic strands are to be found in many individual commentators, and many produced works in more than one genre.

7. *The Philosophers: Adam and Eve as Form and Matter*

The symbolism of the Garden story presented a particular problem to the philosophers and their model of knowledge generated by the reason and the senses as a validating principle of scriptural truth. The philosophers, reading the biblical images and metaphors as references to the concepts of speculative philosophy, offer a number of different exegeses of the Genesis narrative—ranging from Solomon ben Judah ibn Gabirol's allegorical interpretation[107] to Levi ben Gershon's psycho-pedagogical account.[108]

Maimonides (Rabbi Moses ben Maimon, Rambam, 1135–1204), the single most significant figure in mediaeval Jewish philosophy, has been selected as an example of a philosopher offering an interpretation of the story of Adam and Eve.[109] He understood there to be two senses in which biblical imagery could be interpreted:

> an external and an internal one—the external meaning ought to be as beautiful as silver, while the internal meaning ought to be more beautiful than the external one, the former being in comparison to the latter as gold is to silver (*Guide* 1.1).

The relationship between the two senses is that,

> When looked at at a distance or with imperfect attention, it is deemed to be an apple of silver; but when a keen-sighted observer looks at it with full attention, its interior becomes clear to him and he knows that it is of gold.

The gold and the silver have quite different purposes:

> (the) external meaning contains wisdom that is useful in many respects. . . (the) internal meaning, on the other hand, contains wisdom that is useful for beliefs concerned with what the truth is.

The 'internal' is, of course, for the philosopher (the keen-sighted observer concerned with the truth) and the 'external' is for those 'with imperfect attention', 'the young, the women, and all the people to begin with' (*Guide* 1.33).

Maimonides intended the *Guide* to cater to both the philosophical-minded minority and a wider, educated, general Jewish audience. His claim to have written sections for both categories of readers and that the wise would read the sections in a different order from that written has provoked scholars for centuries in their deliberations.

There are two separate treatments of the Genesis narrative in the *Guide* (1.2 and 2.30) which I shall start by examining independently, beginning with ch. 2 of Part 1.

The first chapter of Part 1 of the *Guide* begins with Maimonides' account of the terms 'image' and 'likeness' (Gen. 1.26). He argues that man is only like God and in his image in the sense that the 'Divine Intellect (is) conjoined with man', and not that God has a 'shape' or a 'body'. As Maimonides moves towards the end of the first chapter it appears as if he already has the subject of ch. 2, namely, Adam and the events in the Garden, in mind, in that in his discussion of the term 'likeness' he refers to a tree in a garden (Ezek. 31.8) and a snake (Ps. 58.5).

The framework for ch. 2 is one of the seemingly great philosophical objections to the Garden narrative and Maimonides' corrective response. Before engaging with the objection, Maimonides seeks to clarify the meaning of 'And ye shall be as Elohim, knowing good and evil' (Gen. 3.5). He contends that 'Elohim' can refer to God, angels or the rulers of the cities, and agrees with *Targum Onqelos* that in this context it should be read as 'And ye shall be rulers'.[110]

The 'learned man' protests that the meaning of the biblical text is clear—the 'purpose' of man, and what marks him off from the animals, is his intellect and 'the capacity of distinguish between good and evil'—and yet he is 'punished' for his disobedience by being granted this very 'perfection'—his intellect.[111]

Maimonides offers two counter-arguments based on the order of events in the narrative.[112] First, according to the text (Gen. 1.26) Adam was endowed with his God-given intellect before his disobedience. And secondly, Adam was given a commandment (Gen. 2.16) before the incident with the Tree and 'commandments are not given to beasts and beings devoid of intellect'. Adam before the 'Fall' was possessed of a perfect intellect by means of which he was able to distinguish between the true and the false. He was a contemplative philosopher concerned only with the truth or falsehood of 'intelligible things' ('things of necessity', the 'theoretical') and did not even apprehend 'things generally accepted as known' (conventional or practical knowledge). According to Maimonides, he did not even recognize that his own nakedness was 'evil'. Conventional knowledge is not cognized by the intellect and cannot be *true or false*, but only valued as *good or evil*.[113] As a result of his disobedience, caused by his inclination towards the 'desires of the imagination and the pleasures of his corporeal senses' ('the tree was good for food and. . . a delight to the eyes', Gen. 3.6), Adam was punished by being 'deprived' of his perfect intellectual apprehension and became endowed with the faculty of apprehending 'things generally accepted as known'. Adam now found himself immersed in the evaluation of the things of the 'practical' world as good or evil.

This interpretation is then related to the Genesis text. The understanding of 'Elohim' as 'rulers of the cities' ties in with 'knowing good and evil' (not 'truth and falsehood') as the 'conventional knowledge' that governs the social and political realms.[114] The commandment (Gen. 2.16) is understood as a prohibition of everyday concerns and by implication a recommendation to follow the contemplative life of the philosopher. Gen. 3.7 ('And the eyes of them both. . . ') refers not to physical sight but to their new evaluative faculty.[115]

Maimonides proceeds by relating the verse from Job ('Adam, He changes his face and Thou sends him forth', 14.20) to Adam's post-'Fall' condition and his subsequent expulsion. This is, of course, the verse linked in the midrash (*Gen. R.* 21.4) to the Genesis text.[116] Reading 'changes' as 'turns', Maimonides contends that Adam 'turned' his face away from contemplation towards that which had been forbidden. His expulsion from the Garden was punishment 'measure for measure' as he was reduced from being 'a little lower than Elohim' (Ps. 8.6) to 'the level of the beast' (Gen. 3.18-19, 23). Maimonides ends the chapter with 'Adam, unable to dwell in dignity, is like the beasts that speak not' (Ps. 49.13), as the final answer to the objection—man was a philosopher by nature and lost his perfect intellect, and not vice versa.

This allegorical account of the Genesis narrative, taking place as it does in the context of a discussion of the correct meaning of problematic biblical passages, offers the 'perplexed' a descriptive, rather than prescriptive, reading of Adam as the true philosopher 'fallen' from the certainty of intellectual truth by succumbing to the temptation of worldly affairs. Adam, as the model of man, has to recover his true contemplative nature and disentangle himself from (the exile of his) physical, bodily concerns. Generally speaking this whole account is open and clear.

Maimonides' second account of the Adam story is set within a sustained exposition of Genesis 1–4 (*Guide* 2.30). It forms part of a philosophical discussion of the nature of creation, time and God. Maimonides is most elusive and tells his reader that like the rabbis of the past he will only hint and 'give pointers' to the inner meaning of 'Adam, Eve. . . the Tree of Life and the Tree of Knowledge and the tale of the serpent and all that story', lest he be deemed 'one who divulges a secret' (cf. *b. Hag.* 11b). He ends each obscure subsection with 'This then is clear' or the like. As above, Maimonides draws heavily on the interpretations of the midrashic sages (*Gen. R.*, *PRE*) which he considers to be of 'the utmost perfection' even if their 'external' meanings are 'exceedingly incongruous'.

He accepts that Adam and Eve were created together as 'one' (Gen. 1.27) and interprets this, on the basis of a midrash (*Gen. R.* 8.1), as their being alike in some respects and not so in others (cf. Gen. 2.21-24). He seems to indicate that Adam (form) and Eve (matter) were originally a unity and that matter was subsequently 'created' (separated) from form, giving rise to the entanglement of the latter (form—'the likeness and image of God') in 'dust and darkness' (cf. *Guide* 3.8; 1.28).

Citing another midrash (*PRE* 13), Maimonides bids his readers recall that, when the 'camel-sized' serpent came to deceive Eve, 'Samael was riding upon it; and the Holy One, Blessed Be He, was laughing at both the camel and his rider' (*PRE* 13). He continues by noting that Satan (Samael) only has direct relations with Eve and only through Eve as intermediary did Adam 'fall'. The enmity between Eve and the snake is interpreted as specific to these two and their respective descendants (Gen. 3.15). He quotes the Talmud to the effect that the serpent polluted Eve, that this pollution affected the children of Israel until Mount Sinai, and that the Gentile nations are still so affected (*b. Shab.* 146a; *b. Yev.* 103b). Further, he reminds the reader that the 'trunk' of the Tree of Life corresponds in thickness to a walk that takes 'five hundred years' (*Gen. R.* 15). He ends this 'midrashic' section by quoting *Genesis Rabbah*: 'As for the Tree of Knowledge, the Holy One, Blessed Be He, has never revealed that tree to any man and will never reveal it' (*Gen. R.* 15).

Man is denied the revelation of the ultimate truths of philosophy (the Tree of Knowledge) and perhaps the extent of the 'trunk' (the Tree of Life) suggests the vastness of these truths. The significance of Torah is indicated by the reference to its unique ability to remove the taint of the snake. The next subsection helps to shed light on 'God's laughter'. Maimonides argues that the 'inner' meaning of Gen. 2.15 ('And the Lord took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden. . . ') is revealed by the midrashic rendering of 'put him. . . ' as 'raised him. . . (and) he gave him rest' (*Gen. R.* 16). He glosses this as 'He raised the rank of his existence among the existents that come into being and pass away and established him in a certain state', that is, man is granted rest and becomes part of the 'higher' order beyond the purely transitory. Maimonides ends this section by stating that Adam's first two sons, Cain and Abel, perished and that 'true existence' was vouchsafed by the birth of Seth and thus all is not lost.

We can best understand this chapter as an account of the (archetype of the) individual. We find ourselves embedded in the material realm, partaking of both the higher and lower spheres beset with the possibilities of being drawn further into this realm of 'dust and darkness' by the attraction of our imaginative drives (Samael). There is hope, however, in the Torah, although the choice is between Torah and the idolatry (enslavement to the imagination) of the 'other nations'. We have the opportunity of entering a 'certain state' and living the tranquil life of the contemplative ('rest') and of the subsequent death of our pointless aspirations for possessions and praise (Cain and Abel).

On this basis, we can discern that, of the two accounts of the Garden narrative, one is 'external' (*Guide* 1.2) and the other 'internal' (*Guide* 2.30); the former intended for the general Jewish educated reader and the latter for the philosopher.[117] In both these cases the antidote to Adam's (man's) 'fallen' condition is Torah. The Torah is the guide of 'the first and last man' (*Guide* 1.2), 'the Book that has illumined the darkness of the world' (3.10), teaching man to control the imagination and overcome the allure of the senses and to develop his intellect. It is important to note that Maimonides does not consider evil to be anything but privation (the absence of the good) and thus he does not discover evil (or sin) in the Garden but just the absence of contemplative possibilities. Once again we discover that the Torah is the perfect counterpart to the particular understanding of Adam in the Genesis narrative.

8. *An Overview—Adam and Sin*

The above three interpretative modes—the midrashic, the kabbalistic and the (mediaeval) philosophical—have all lost their hold in the modern world. There are, of course, enclaves where the traditional modes are still alive and even flourishing. Generally speaking, however, the social realities reflected in, and determined by, these modes are long past. Historically, Jewish exegetes could assume an audience for whom the Hebrew language was a learned language, akin in some ways to mediaeval Latin but with a broader social base. More importantly they could assume an education in, and intimacy with, the biblical text and the traditions of its interpretation. Neither of these factors now pertain to modern Jewish communities. Jewish education, when and where it is taken up, is one option among others, and entails much more than the study of traditional sources. The majority of Jews are no longer so familiar with Hebrew *or* the biblical text. Paradoxically, the transition of Hebrew from a learned to a spoken language in modern Israel resulted in a lesser degree of access to the traditional texts.[118]

Orthodox Jewish scholars have yet to engage fully with critical biblical scholarship, never mind find their way out of it, and the same is true of most communities. There are a number of significant, and sometimes ingenious, modern interpretations of specific elements of the Garden story, such as Abraham Isaac Kook's likening of the secular (non-religious) and religious in modern Israel to the intertwined nature of Adam and Eve (Gen. 1.26),[119] and interpretations by Jewish feminists.[120] The nineteenth and twentieth centuries have witnessed new Jewish attempts to read the Garden story in terms of contemporary philosophies (e.g. Hermann Cohen), in particular with modern notions of freedom, so that the 'Fall' becomes a 'Fall upwards' into freedom.[121]

Jewish biblical commentaries anthologized from past sources continue to appear.[122] After the above examination of the riches of the Jewish exegetical tradition it is somewhat lamentable to examine briefly the recent and popular Artscroll Tanach (Bible) Series.[123] A team of rabbis offer commentaries on the biblical books (among others) culled from midrashic, talmudic and other texts. These are aimed at those who do not know Hebrew well enough to read the texts themselves and the commentaries suggest that the intended audience do not know the texts either. In the first of the volumes on Genesis,[124] Rabbi Nosson Scherman's 'An Overview—Adam and Sin'[125] (and this is true of the volume as a whole) does not deal directly with the 'language' level of the biblical text at all, and offers no new midrashic interpretations but rather a univocal series of snippets from largely un-referenced texts spanning centuries.

Scherman asks that we utterly reject the 'foolish myth of "apples in Eden"', and begins with the first man before his sin and his comprehensive appreciation of all facets of creation—'no one ever comprehended better than Adam how each of his actions could determine the course of creation' (based on *b. Hag.* 12a). If Adam had but resisted temptation in the few hours between his creation and the first Sabbath the world would have remained in a state of perfection and the final purpose of creation would have been realized. Although, he insists, we cannot compare ourselves to Adam—'whose heels were equal in brilliance to two suns' (*b. B. Bat.* 58a) even after his sin—we are still in Adam's position regarding our need to trust totally in God come what may, and that 'it is not the snake that kills but the sin' (*b. Ber.* 33a). As a consequence of Adam's falling prey to the externalized snake, representing the evil inclination, this has become internalized so that for us the desire to sin comes from mixture of good and evil within. The climax of Scherman's overview is that Torah is the antidote to the effects of Adam's sin and that the Tree of Life is still accessible via observance of the commandments.

Commentaries such as this are manifestly a reaction to Jewish accommodations to biblical criticism and other modern approaches to the Bible and the perceived effects of such developments on the non-learned Jewish public.[126] Philosophical, including Jewish rationalistic, and mystical interpretation have their origins in midrashic exegesis, with its particular hermeneutic of attention to the 'language level' of the biblical text and to the text as a whole. Midrashic associations have become enshrined in Jewish biblical exegesis but historically it seems only at the cost of the possibility of different interpretations. The way in which past associations become part of the biblical text, as it were, is vital to the establishment of a historical 'community of interpretation'.

Both the philosophical and kabbalistic reading of Scripture tended, in spite of protestations to the contrary and a surface hermeneutic of different levels of interpretation, to grant a priority to a particular level of meaning (for example, for Maimonides the external sense is more often treated like dross than silver). But all three modes pay particular attention to the meanings of words and the contextual usages. From midrashic sources we can learn that there is no 'original' meaning to be discerned, but that as believers (or not as the case may be) our lives are textual eisegesis and not vice versa; that is, the interpretation of the text is worked out in our individual and collective histories. Further, we can recognize the wisdom in not taking biblical sections (or worse, smaller units) in isolation from a series of linkages with other passages and ultimately the text as a whole. There is cause for some hope, given the recent concern, that midrashic exegesis can be revived in a contemporary guise as the deficiencies of so-called objectivity in biblical scholarship (the history of the biblical text) are overcome.

Kabbalistic and philosophical interpretations highlight the importance of the vibrancy, innovation and daring of the exegetical tradition. They also demonstrate the religious necessity of the tradition developing exemplars of human life on the basis of its reading of Scripture. They offer a counter-model to what Franz Rosenzweig called 'sermonic Judaism', that is, a religion of platitudes in the name of the rabbis. These two interpretative traditions read the biblical text as relevant to the dominant religious and philosophical concerns of the day. Kabbalistic readings of Torah, most importantly, offer a model of 'humanism' that, unlike the Renaissance and Enlightenment versions, is not divorced from concerns with the divine (theology). The kabbalists were always aware that their 'mystical talk' was just that, a way of speaking about things at the very limits and margins of human language(s). Bearing this in mind, we can discover in their supreme evaluation of the significance of human activity ('man' is nothing less than the 'central column' of the *sefirotic* tree [Divinity], *Zohar* 26b) a view of man akin to modern conceptions. And yet what is the point of this activity? To 'create' God 'as it were' (*Zohar* 3.113a). We can learn from the kabbalists that we are not faced with the choice between the human or the divine but that this very distinction must be called into question. This 'unity' of the human and the divine is, of course, discovered in Torah and we must learn to read Scripture in such a unified manner. Kabbalah can potentially offer an alternative form of modernity. The breach between man and God in the modern world might be considered as exactly the sort of exile referred to in the kabbalah. All three exegetical modes treat the biblical text with a seriousness and care that reflects its construction both as a whole and of its individual elements.

The Genesis narrative of Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden presents the Jew with a framework for understanding his/her fundamental nature and primary relationships. It raises questions about the purpose of human life, its beginnings and its ends, and the way it is and might be. For the Jews traditionally the answer has been the Torah—'a Tree of Life to those who grasp her. 'As for the Tree of Knowledge, the Holy One, Blessed Be He, has never revealed that tree to any man and will never reveal it' (*Gen. R.* 15).

Notes

1. One of the earliest postbiblical works inspired by the Eden story is to be found in the Dead Sea Scrolls (*Thanksgiving Psalms*). In the verdant garden, planted by God, we find two groups of trees—The Trees of Water ('watered') and the Trees of Life. The former represent the ruling authorities of the time and the latter, the Dead Sea community. Although the Trees of Life are hidden, unrecognized, and inaccessible ('hedged in by whirling flaming [flashing] fire'), they will 'one day put forward the shoot of holiness of the Plant of Truth', bearing the fruits (of the Tree of Life) and (re)create 'the Eden of Glory'. See E.L. Sukenik, *The Dead Sea Scrolls of the Hebrew University, The Hymn Scroll* (Jerusalem: Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Magnes, 1955), the opening section of the 16th hymn. A translation can be found in G. Vermes, *The Dead Sea Scrolls in English* (London: Penguin Books, 1968), hymn no. 14, pp. 176-78; cf. hymn no. 10, pp. 168-72, where similar Edenic themes are explored.

2. J.B. Soloveitchik, 'The Lonely Man of Faith', *Tradition* 7 (1965), pp. 5-67; a version adapted from Soloveitchik's original lecture appears in A.R. Besdin (ed.), *Man of Faith in the Modern World: Reflections of the Rav*, II (New York: Ktav, 1989), pp. 36-55; See also J.B. Soloveitchik, *Halakhic Man* (trans. L. Kaplan; Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1983), and *The Halakhic Mind* (trans. L. Kaplan; New York: Seth Press, 1986). Philo, *On the Account of the World's Creation* (trans. F. Colson and G. Whitaker; Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1929), p. xlvi; Philo, *Questions and Answers on Genesis* (trans. R. Marcus; Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1953), Book 1, questions 4 and 8.

3. English translation by Seymour Simckes (New York: Atheneum, 1971).

4. On the relationship between pre-sin Adam and Jewish eschatology, see G. Scholem, *The Messianic Idea in Judaism and Other Essays in Jewish Spirituality* (New York: Schocken Books, 1971), pp. 1-77.

5. *The Authorised Daily Prayer Book* (London: United Synagogue, 3rd edn, 1990). Associations between marriage and the first couple are frequently made (e.g. *Gen. R.* 18.1, where 'He adorned her as a bride and brought her to him [Adam]'), and the 'covering' of every precious stone (Ezek. 28.13) is linked to the covering of the bridal canopy. The wedding of the first couple is the paradigm for all subsequent

weddings. God does Eve's hair, dresses her, brings her to her husband, and acts as Adam's best man (*ARN* 4.3). In imitation of God, scholars are permitted to break their Torah studies to attend weddings (and funerals) (*ARN* 4.3). The first wedding was the best ever—God pronounced the blessing, the angels provided the music and God prepared the bridal chamber (*PRE* 12). Jewish law requires that procreation is fulfilled by having one son and one daughter, in imitation of God's creation of Adam and Eve. The order of the verses in Genesis—that Eve is referred to as 'helpmate' (2.18) before the mention of 'one flesh' (procreation, 2.24) is understood by the rabbis as indicating that the relationship between husbands and wives is independent of procreation. This is interpreted in the light of Exod. 21.10 (the rights of female slaves) and Gen. 3.16 ('desire for her husband') to refer to the sexual rights within marriage. God's blessing of the first couple ('them', Gen. 1.28) is understood that an unmarried man 'is without blessing' (*Midrash on Psalms* 59.2; cf. *Zohar Ḥadash* 4.50b). The centrality of the wedding (marriage) is indicated by the metaphor of marriage used for the relationship between God and Israel at Sinai, with the Torah as the marriage contract. See the bridegroom's 'prayer' by Amittai ben Shephatiah (in T. Carmi [ed. and trans.], *Hebrew Poetry* [London: Penguin Books, 1981], pp. 235-38). Also, in the liturgy for the Ninth of Av (in A. Rosenfeld [ed.], *Seder Kinot Ha-Shalem Le-Tishah Be-Av* [London: Labworth, 5730/1970) commemorating the destruction of the temples, and a number of other disasters, links are forged between the horrendous trials of the past and the coming redemption. The biblical story of Adam prefigures both the history of Israel and humanity and the glorious 'end times'. The recitation of the *Book of Lamentations* is introduced by associating it with God's question to Adam in the Garden, 'Where are you?' (the word 'where' is read as 'How', the first word of *Lamentations* [*Gen. R.* 19.11; *Lam. R.* 3.5]). The central feature of the service is the poetic additions to the repetition of the *Amidah* (*kerovot*). The *kerova* of Eleazar Kallir (sixth or seventh century) is a lament for the destruction of Jerusalem, the last part of which describes the final battle at the end of time. The gates of the Garden of Eden are opened to reveal the Tree of Life. God can be heard once again 'walking' in the garden and once more our 'likeness' to God is recognized and the righteous proclaim 'we shall not die'. They witness the final battle between Leviathan (the serpent, aided by the 'serpent' and the 'coiled serpent') and Behemot (the concealed one)—evil (the serpent) has yet to be finally defeated. Behemot hides in the Trees of Eden but his burning tail ignites the spice and lilies of Eden and incense rises to God (cf. Song 4.16). The righteous eat the beasts (of Job 40–41). The section ends with 'Blessed is the Eternal One, for everything that He ordained long ago, He now accomplishes at the end of time'.

6. L. Ginzberg, *The Legends of the Jews*, I and V (trans. H. Szold; Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1947).

7. See G. Vermes, *Post Biblical Jewish Studies* (Leiden: Brill, 1975). There is a great deal of work to be done comparing the various versions of interpretative units in different midrashim in order to trace the 'pre-history' of midrashic elements (e.g. *Gen. R.* and *Lev. R.* on Gen. 1.7). At its worst this approach is rather like the earlier isolation of Sumerian, Babylonian, or Mesopotamian elements and identifying these

with biblical materials, all too often claiming that the earlier versions allow us to fill in the gaps or somehow discover the missing but vital element in the later. John Levison's *Portraits of Adam in Early Judaism: From Sirach to 2 Baruch* (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1988) highlights a number of significant thematics later developed in rabbinic accounts and his time-frame could be extended to later materials. The great advantage of Levison's 'method' over that of Vermes is his concentration on the *tendenz* of each text, although his own Christian 'tendenz' tends to shape his selection and interpretation of materials.

[8] For the purposes of this chapter the distinction between *aggadah* and midrash has been disregarded. See G. Porton, 'Defining Midrash', in J. Neusner (ed.), *The Study of Ancient Judaism* (New York: Ktav, 1981), pp. 55-92; R. Bloch, 'Midrash', in W.S. Green (ed.), *Approaches to Ancient Judaism*, I (Missoula, MT: Scholars Press, 1978), pp. 29-50; J. Bowker, *The Targums and Rabbinic Interpretation* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1969), pp. 40-92; D. Boyarin, *Intertextuality and the Reading of Midrash* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1990); I. Chernus, 'History and Paradox in Rabbinic Midrash', in his *Mysticism in Rabbinic Judaism* (Berlin: de Gruyter, 1982); J. Faur, *Golden Doves with Silver Dots: Semiotics and Textuality in Rabbinic Tradition* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1986); G. Hartman and S. Budick (eds.), *Midrash and Literature* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1986); J. Goldin, 'The Freedom and Restraint of Haggadah', in *Midrash and Literature*, pp. 57-76; *idem*, *Studies in Midrash and Related Literature* (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1988); I. Heinemann, *Darkhei Ha-Aggadah* (Jerusalem: Magnes, 1974); J. Heinemann, 'The Nature of the Aggadah', in *Midrash and Literature*, pp. 41-55; J. Kugel, 'Two Introductions to Midrash', in *Midrash and Literature*, pp. 77-103; S. Lieberman, 'Rabbinic Interpretation of Scripture', in *Hellenism in Jewish Palestine* (New York: Jewish Theological Seminary of America, 1950), pp. 47-67; R. Loewe, 'The "Plain" Meaning of Scripture in Early Jewish Exegesis', *Papers of the Institute of Jewish Studies* 1 (1964), pp. 140-85; J. Neusner, *Midrash in Context: Exegesis in Formative Judaism* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1983); *idem*, *Canon and Connection* (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1987); S. Rawidowicz, 'On Interpretation', in N.N. Glatzer (ed.), *Studies in Jewish Thought* (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1974); R.S. Sarason, 'Toward a New Agendum for the Study of Rabbinic Midrashic Literature', in J.J. Petuchowski and E. Fleischer (eds.), *Studies in Aggadah, Targum, and Jewish Liturgy* (Jerusalem: Magnes, 1981), pp. 55-71; E. Slomovic, 'Patterns of Midrashic Impact on the Rabbinic Midrashic Tale', *JSJ* 19 (1988), pp. 61-91.

[9] All of the above features are to be found in *Gen. R.* 1.1–4.5.

[10] An argument made by Boyarin (*Intertextuality*) and by M. Fishbane (*Midrash and Literature*, pp. 19-37). With regard to the latter, it appears that the most significant difference between 'inner-biblical exegesis' and midrash relates to the issue of canon, in that, the Torah-text as a whole supplies the specific framework for the generation of midrash.

[11] For details of the recent debate over midrash as literary theory, see Boyarin, *Intertextuality*; G. Burns, 'Midrash and Allegory', in F. Kermode and R. Alter

(eds.), *The Literary Guide to the Bible* (London: Collins, 1987), pp. 625-46; Hartman and Budick (eds.), *Midrash and Literature*; D. Stern, 'Rhetoric and Midrash: The Case of the Maharal', *Prooftexts* 1 (1981), pp. 261-91; *idem*, 'Moses-cide: Midrash and Contemporary Criticism', *Prooftexts* 4 (1984), pp. 193-204; *idem*, 'Literary Criticism or Literary Homilies?', *Prooftexts* 5 (1985), pp. 96-103; *idem*, 'Midrash and Indeterminacy', *Critical Inquiry* 15 (1988), pp. 132-62; S. Handelman, *The Slayers of Moses: The Emergence of Rabbinic Interpretation in Modern Literature* (Albany, NY: SUNY Press, 1982); *idem*, 'Fragments on the Rock: Contemporary Literary Theory and the Study of Rabbinic Texts: A Response to David Stern', *Prooftexts* 5 (1985), pp. 75-95. The debate is between those that conceive of midrash (with its concern with the textual ['language'] level itself) in contrast to the dominant logocentrism of the West's inherited Greek tradition (with its aim to discern the reality behind the text), and those that find such an identification problematic. Much of the confusion would be avoided by simply distinguishing the construction of a post-structuralist literary theory based on the midrashic reading of Scripture (perhaps 'neo-midrashic critical theory') *from* the study of historical midrashic texts. *Midrash and Literature* is based on the editors' attempt to blur this very distinction, although it should be noted that a number of individual contributors do not support such an ahistorical conflation. David Stern is correct in noting the impossibility of 'mapping' contemporary theoretical concerns onto ancient texts (Stern, 'Indeterminacy').

12. Cf. 'Ben Bag-Bag said, "Turn it, turn it, for everything is in it. . . " ' (*m. Av.* 5.22).

13. See, for example, Handelman, *Slayers*, where such a distinction is forged as the basis of her analysis. It should be noted, however, that Handelman is clear that her interests are in developing a textual theory rather than in the texts themselves (p. xv).

14. Note that there are often Aramaic equivalents given to Hebrew place-names, etc. The standard text is that of J. Theodor and C. Albeck (eds.), *Midrash Bereshit Rabbah* (3 vols.; Jerusalem: Wahrmann, 2nd edn, 1965 [1912]); ET: H. Freedman and M. Simon (eds.), *Midrash Rabbah* (10 vols.; London: Soncino, 1939) [*Genesis*, I–II]. J. Neusner's recently published 'new American translation', *Genesis Rabbah: The Judaic Commentary to the Book of Genesis* (3 vols.; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1985), is a strange and often insightful work which operates at two discrete levels of analysis. First, he attempts to understand the text as a whole and not to accept the small-unit (verse) theory of scholars such as Kugel (see *Midrash and Literature*, pp. 77-103). In this, he is absolutely right and this approach yields much of value for our comprehension of the interrelations between apparently independent units. Secondly, he seeks to establish that the 'editors' proceed by means of a 'syllogistic' frame (akin to the structure discerned by Neusner to be at work in the Mishnah). But here, he has somewhat to force the material into this structure. The greatest difficulty with Neusner's commentary is the huge gap between these two levels of analysis. There is nothing between the macro-analysis of the whole text and the imposition of the syllogism at the micro-level of the individual section, as evidenced by the literally scores of times in which he claims that there is no connection between the different

texts cited by the rabbis. All too often these links can, in fact, be discovered, but not syllogistically, and his claim that 'people make of scripture anything they wish' is not supported by the evident underlying other (non-syllogistic) structures of rabbinic interpretation. His interpretative model appears just to be too rigidly formal a structure (too Greek?). And by only attending to this single level of analysis, albeit salient—he seeks a *single* syllogism each time—he ignores the import of the 'language' level, thus reducing alternative explanations to arguments losing the very beauty and sophistication of the plurality of midrashic exegesis.

15. The discourse on Gen. 1.1 begins with the citation of Prov. 8.30-31, where the word 'child' can be read as 'hidden'. Cf. on Gen. 1.4, in connection with the emptiness (void), that Deut. 32.46 is cited and understood as meaning that the Torah is empty 'from you'—only 'because you do not know how to interpret it' (cf. *Gen. R.* 22.2).

16. So that, for example, the five mentions of 'light' (Gen. 1.2-3) 'are' the Five Books of Moses (*Gen. R.* 3.5, world-text = Torah-text); or, the order of the first day 'is' the generations of Adam, Cain, Enosh (darkness) and the patriarchs (light), and the 'one day' 'is' Yom Kippur (*Gen. R.* 2.2, 3); or, Babylonia, Media (cf. Esth. 6.14), Greece, and Rome (darkness) and the messiah (light) (*Gen. R.* 2.4; see also 16.4); or, the building, destruction and messianic rebuilding of the Temple (*Gen. R.* 2.4.); or the 'gathered waters' 'are' the gathered waters of the Flood and the waters gathered to allow for the crossing of the Red Sea (*Gen. R.* 5.5).

17. E.g. Adam is identified with Abraham (*Gen. R.* 14.6 on 'the man' [Gen. 2.7]; *Gen. R.* 15.5; and 12.9 on Gen. 2.4; *Gen. R.* 24.5). See also *Gen. R.* 5.5; 6.5, 9; 19.7; 26.6, where Israel's righteousness is the counterpart to Gentile wickedness.

18. For example, the Sabbath (*Gen. R.* 16.5, where 'to till it and keep it [Gen. 2.15] is taken to refer to 'six days shall you till' [Exod. 20.9] and 'keep the Sabbath day' [Deut. 5.12]; also 6.3); and the temple (*Gen. R.* 14.8, where Gen. 2.7 'from the earth' is understood in terms of Exod. 20.24, 'You shall make me an altar of earth', so that Adam was created from the earth/source 'of atonement'; see also 3.4; 16.3); *havdalah* (*Gen. R.* 3.6 [*m. Ber.* 8.5] on Gen. 1.3).

19. Cf. *Gen. R.* 1.2.

20. E.g. 'He declares the end from the beginning' (*Gen. R.* 16.2-3 on Isa. 46.10); also *Gen. R.* 3.6, 63.

21. Adam before his sin was perfect (*Gen. R.* 12.6-7) and mistaken by the angel for God (*Gen. R.* 8.10). He was as central as the Temple dough offering (*Gen. R.* 17.8) and he is superior to the angels who cannot give the correct names to things (*Gen. R.* 17.4). He stretched from one end of the world to the other (*Gen. R.* 8.1 on Gen. 1.26, and Ps. 139.5, 16; *Gen. R.* 21.3). He is eternal (*Gen. R.* 21.5) and androgynous ('male and female he created them and called them 'Adam') and was only 'later sawed in half' (suggests Rabbi Samuel bar Nahman [*Gen. R.* 8.1]). Adam and Eve were created at twenty years of age (*Gen. R.* 14.7, reading *aphar* [dust] as *opher* [youth]) and wore 'garments of light' (using a homonym of skin/light, *Gen. R.* 20.12). 'But Adam passes not the (one) night in glory' (Ps. 49.13; *Gen. R.* 12.6) ('You change his countenance and send him away' [Job 14.20;

Gen. R. 21.4]) and he was of such diminished proportions that he could hide in the trees (*Gen. R.* 19.8-9). But even after his sin, Adam is still credited with teaching humankind all manner of crafts (*Gen. R.* 24.7).

22. See *Gen. R.* 8.11. Adam has a dual nature and partakes of the upper and lower worlds—'if he sins, he dies, and if not he lives' (*Gen. R.* 8.11 on Gen. 1.28). He is subject to all the oppositional tensions that are characteristic of life—Adam is 'very good' and 'the crown of creation' (*Gen. R.* 9.12) but unlike the angels (*Gen. R.* 48.11) is subject to the evil impulse (*Gen. R.* 9.7). The rabbis go to some length to argue that just as the evil impulse is necessary and ultimately beneficial (good), so too are the other factors that distinguish man from God—death (*Gen. R.* 9.5); sleep (*Gen. R.* 9.6); suffering (*Gen. R.* 9.8); and, being subject to Gehenna (*Gen. R.* 9.9), the angel of death (*Gen. R.* 9.10), and punishment (*Gen. R.* 9.11). All these ensure justice or merit and only appear to be 'evil' (included in this category is even Edom/Rome, *Gen. R.* 9.13 and *Gen. R.* 10.7 on Isa. 43.4, which is one possible 'reading' of Adam) but are, in fact, part of the processes of perfection built into the structure of creation. To begin with, man was created from the dust, and Eve was from the man but from now on 'in our image and likeness' (*Gen. R.* 8.9 on Gen. 1.26 linked to Gen. 2.7) and therefore 'there is no possibility for a man without a woman, nor for a woman without a man, nor for the two of them without the Divine Presence' (*Gen. R.* 8.9).

23. Adam was created to study (work) Torah but after his sin has to work the land, and this loss is the nub of his punishment (*Gen. R.* 13.1). The snake as 'more subtle. . . ' (Gen. 3.1) before his sin is paralleled by his post-sin 'more cursed. . . ' (Gen. 3.14). Kohelet 1.18 ('For in much wisdom is much anger, and he who increases knowledge increases sorrow') is used as the introductory proem for the interpretation of the Genesis chapter, to refer both to the serpent and by extension to humankind (see *Gen. R.* 20.1). Apparently, the serpent looked like a camel before being cursed (*Gen. R.* 19.1). It was easier to sway the woman (see *Gen. R.* 17.8 on woman's characteristics); although one authority (*Gen. R.* 19.4) suggests that to prove his case (i.e. that God lied), the snake pushed Eve against the tree (and she did not die).

24. The earth disobeyed God in not producing only edible stuffs (Gen. 1.11) but going beyond God's commandment (*Gen. R.* 5.9).

25. Adam was sleeping after intercourse or on a temporal/spatial world tour (*Gen. R.* 19.2). On the sexual link and the snake, see *Gen. R.* 18.6; 20.4. Rashi links the proximity of 'they were naked' to the mention of the snake as the foundation of this connection. The theme of competition between the snake and Adam (sexual–Eve) is paralleled by the competition between man and God (creative power) in *Gen. R.* 19.4. Eve was created 'in secret' so that Adam could not watch the awesome business (*Gen. R.* 17.7).

26. The vine (*Gen. R.* 19.5); the (citron) *etrog* (*Gen. R.* 20.8); wheat, figs, citron, 'a secret' (*Gen. R.* 15.17).

27. See *Gen. R.* 19.5, where *gam* (also) is taken to include the animals.

28. Cf. *Gen. R.* 19.6.

29. The snake was a 'disbeliever' (*Gen. R.* 19.2); see note 43; all three were

guilty of arrogance (*Gen. R.* 19.3), usurping God (*Gen. R.* 19.4), theft (*Gen. R.* 19.8), slander (*Gen. R.* 20.2), blasphemy (*Gen. R.* 19.12), disobedience (*Gen. R.* 21.3); heresy (*Gen. R.* 21.5); *Gen. R.* 9.6 states that Adam only dies because later men will blur the distinction between man and God.

30. *Gen. R.* 18.7 reading 'in the cool of the day' as a 'moratorium of a day'.

31. As it is claimed in the psalms that 1000 years is a day in God's eyes, Adam lived for 930 years, either because he gave 70 years to King David, or 70 years to everyone (Ps. 90.10) (*Gen. R.* 19.8). *Gen. R.* 24.7 calculates that the gap between the Garden and the birth of the twins was 130 years (based on Gen. 5.3), during which both Adam and Eve ('mother of all living' is taken to include demons, *Gen. R.* 20.11) consorted with evil forces to generate the complete demonic world.

32. *Gen. R.* 19.7; also *Gen. R.* 19.8.

33. 'The wicked snake is glib and if I speak to him something he will answer me' (*Gen. R.* 20.2).

34. *Gen. R.* 20.5-7.

35. *Gen. R.* 21.6; Adam is offered but refuses repentance. *Gen. R.* 22.13 teaches that Adam only learns the meaning of repentance from Cain, in response to the former's question, 'What happened at your trial?' The parallel is drawn between Adam's eventual reconciliation with God and Israel's relationship with God through the Sabbath.

36. *Gen. R.* 19.6.

37. *Gen. R.* 14.2-5 on Gen. 2.7 ('And the Lord *formed*') offers a number of accounts of a twofold creation indicated by the double 'Y'—the word is written in plene—(Adam and Eve; this world and the world to come; the upper and lower worlds; and the good inclination and the evil inclination, *Gen. R.* 14.4).

38. See note 30.

39. The link is forged between the 'S' in 'closed up' and that in *S*atan, so 'When woman was created, Satan was created with her' (*Gen. R.* 17.5).

40. The 71 mentions of God's name are interpreted as 'proof' that a full sanhedrin tried the serpent (*Gen. R.* 20.4).

41. On Adamah/Adam, see, for example, *Gen. R.* 17.4; *ish/ishah*, *Gen. R.* 18.4; Eve/snake, *Gen. R.* 20.11.

42. Eve is held guilty of too severe a 'fence' around the Torah—a warning to the rabbinic legislators (*Gen. R.* 19.3).

43. See *Gen. R.* 17.2 on Gen. 2.18; *Gen. R.* 18.4, where Gen. 2.23 is understood as a legitimate Jewish marriage; *Gen. R.* 18.5 on Gen. 2.24.

44. *Gen. R.* 20.6 on Gen. 3.16.

45. *Gen. R.* 20.9, where the miraculous nature of earning a livelihood is likened to the miracle of redemption! And according to Rabbi Samuel bar Nahman making a living is greater than redemption!

46. *Gen. R.* 20.10.

47. See note 17. There are many such 'lists' leading down from Adam to Abraham and then the 'saving' value of Torah-study (e.g. *Gen. R.* 22.6).

48. Like Job, Adam was tempted by his wife but, unlike Job, Adam succumbed. A further distinction between the two is forged by charging Adam with blasphemy

(based on Gen. 3.12) but not Job (*Gen. R.* 19.12). For Adam and Moses, see *Gen. R.* 24.5.

49. *Gen. R.* 18.2; see also the links to Esther (*Gen. R.* 19.2).

50. See note 4. Many other parallels are forged, for example, just as it is not good for Adam to be alone and Eve is especially created for Adam, so it is not good for the Sabbath to be alone (the other days being in pairs) and Israel is created as her 'mate' (*Gen. R.* 11.8).

51. While Adam was given *six* commandments and failed, Moses was given 613 which Israel keep (*Gen. R.* 24.7).

52. Cf. *b. Ber.* 2b. Also see Maimonides, *The Guide of the Perplexed* 3.35, 40. In modern times the central advocate of the Noahite code as universal natural law is Hermann Cohen, who read them as a liberal programme of the ground of the laws of the state and individual freedom of conscience based on the fact that they do not entail 'belief' (*Religion of Reason out of the Sources of Judaism* [trans. S. Kaplan; New York: Ungar, 1972], pp. 122-23).

53. The usual list is as follows: (1) establishing law courts (*Dinnim*); (2) prohibitions against: idolatry (*Kilelat Ha-Shem*); (3) blasphemy (*Avodah Zarah*); (4) illicit sexual relations (*Gikuy Arayot*); (5) murder (*Shefikhut Damin*); (6) theft (*Ha-Gezel*); and (7) tearing the limb/flesh from a living animal (*Eber Min Ha-Hy*). The earliest reference is in *t. Ab. Zar.* 8.4 (late 2nd century CE?).

54. The link between the commandment to Adam (Gen. 2.16) and the above list is found in the Talmud (*b. Sanh.* 56b). On the distinction between the revelations to Adam and Noah, see *Midrash Tanhuma* (S. Buber [ed.], Yitro, 2 and 7 [Vilna: Romm, 1885; repr. Jerusalem: Makor, 1972]).

55. *Gen. R.* 16.6. See also *Cant. R.* 1.16; *Pes. K.*, *Ba-Hodesh*, 202-203.

56. In the Talmud (*Sanh.* 56b) *vayezav* ('and he commanded') is associated with *yezev* (Gen. 18.19) and again with *zivitim* (Exod. 32.8) where the golden calf provides the link to idolatry. Rashi (*Talmud Commentary on Sanhedrin*) connects Gen. 2.16 to Hos. 5.11 along the lines of *Gen. R.* 16.6.

57. The Talmud offers the same account (*b. Sanh.* 56b). See *b. Sanh.* 66a on the two meanings of *elohim*. *Targum Onqelos* reads Exod. 22.27 in a similar way by reading *elohim* as *dayyana* (judges).

58. The Talmud offers the same reading. This reading has been revived by Buber and Rosenzweig in their German biblical translation.

59. The Talmud offers the same reading. Cf. Deut. 24.1-4, *m. Git.* 9.10 and *b. Git.* 90a.

60. This appears to be the only one of the seven commandments to be directly commanded in the Bible (Gen. 9.4—'You must not, however, eat the flesh with its life-blood in it [be-nafsho damo]'). This verse is linked to 2.16. See also *b. Sanh.* 59b; and Rashi who glosses 'that which is ready for food'. The sense is 'you may eat freely. . . ', but not a limb torn from a living animal. The reason for excluding this commandment from those given to Adam is that the eating of flesh was not permitted at all before Noah (Gen. 9.3).

61. The debates over the legal status of the Adamic/Noahite laws depend on the relationship between Gen. 2.16 and the seven commandments held to be contained

within the original command. Either the commands are to be found in the Genesis text or they can only be, at best, inferred. The various views range from Judah Ha-Levi's contention that there is only an 'indirect basis' and Albo's characterization (*Sefer Ha-Ikkarim*, I [ed. and trans. I. Husik; Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1946], pp. 17-18) of the connection as *remez* ('allusion', that is, the laws are alluded to in Gen. 2.16), to Rabbi Meir Abulafia's assertion of a direct exegetical link.

62. The standard text is S. Schechter (ed.), *Avot de-Rabbi Natan* (New York: Feldheim, 1945 [1887]). English translations include J. Goldin (trans.), *The Fathers according to Rabbi Nathan* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1955); J. Neusner (trans.), *The Fathers according to Rabbi Nathan* (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1986). Regarding version B, see A.J. Saldarini (trans.), *The Fathers according to Rabbi Nathan* (Leiden: Brill, 1975); also Saldarini's *Scholastic Rabbinism: A Literary Study of the Fathers according to Rabbi Nathan* (Chico, CA: Scholars Press, 1982).

63. *ARN* 1.8-10; see also the commentary on *Ab*. 4.28, where the three sins of 'envy, greed and ambition (drive man [Adam] out of the world)'.

64. *Pirkei De-Rabbi Eliezer* (ed. R.D. Luria; Warsaw: Bamberg, 1852; Jerusalem: Makor, 1963 [1514]); *Pirkei De-Rabbi Eliezer* (trans. G. Friedlander; New York: Sepher-Hermon, 1965 [1916]). The text probably dates from the ninth century CE.

65. Luria, *PRE* 12; Friedlander, *PRE* 13. 'As for the serpent every act that he performed and every word that he spoke (was) only at the will of Samael' (*PRE* 13.3). On the relationship of Samael and Eve, see *PRE* 21; *t. Sot.* 6.17; and *b. Yeb.* 103b, 'when the serpent went into Eve, he injected her with contaminating lust. . . the Israelites at Sinai lost their contaminating lust'. This association of the 'snake' with Samael ('Satan') had important implications for later mystical interpretations of the origin and source of evil. The above passage was cited in the first Kabbalistic text, *Sefer Ha-Bahir* (sec. 200), and thus became an accepted interpretation and the foundation for further elaborations of this theme (see below).

66. *Tanna De-Vei Eliyahu (Seder Eliyahu Rabbah ve Seder Eliyahu Zuta)* (ed. M. Friedman; Vienna: Achiassaf, 1902; Jerusalem: Bamberger & Wahrmann, 1960); *Tanna De-Vei Eliyahu* (trans. W. Braude and I.J. Kapstein; Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1981). See *Eliyahu Rabbah*, chapter 1, pp. 3-4 (Braude, pp. 42-45) and chapter 29, pp. 160-65 (Braude, pp. 388-94) on the exile of God (Gen. 3.24); *Eliyahu Zuta*, pp. 81-82 (Braude, pp. 218-20) and chapter 2, pp. 173-75 (Braude, pp. 410-13).

67. *Pesikta Rabbati* (ed. M. Friedman; Vienna, 1880; Jerusalem: Makor, 1963); *Pesikta Rabbati* (trans. W. Braude; 2 vols.; New Haven: Yale University Press, 1968). See 5.5-7 and 15.2-3 on Adam as cause of God's exile from the world; also 7.2; 14.9-10; 17.1; 23.1, 6; 26.1-2; 40.2; 42.1; 43.2; 46.1-2; 47.3; 48.2; 50.1, 5; 52.3. In this text the narratives are linked to the cycle of Sabbaths and festivals and, therefore, set in the framework of appropriate homilies.

68. *Midrash Tanhuma* (Jerusalem: Eshkol, 1972); *Midrash Tanhuma* (ed. S. Buber; Vilna: Romm, 1885; Jerusalem, 1964), *Midrash Tanhuma* (Buber edition). I.

Genesis (trans. J.T. Townsend; New York: Ktav, 1989). See 1.25 on Gen. 3.23-24.

69. *Pesikta De-Rav Kahna* (ed. D. Mandelbaum; 2 vols.; New York: Jewish Theological Seminary, 1962); *Pesikta De-Rav Kahana* (trans. W. Braude and I.J. Kapstein; 2 vols.; Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1975).

70. See also *Mekilta De-Rabbi Ishmael* (ed. and trans. J.Z. Lauterbach; 3 vols.; Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1976 [1933]); *The Midrash on Psalms* (trans. W. Braude; 2 vols.; New Haven: Yale University Press, 1959); *Midrash Telihim* (ed. S. Buber; Vilna: Romm, 1891; Jerusalem: Vagshal, 1966); and the later collections: *Yalkut Shimoni al Ha-Torah* (6 vols.; ed. D. Heyman and Y. Shiloni; Jerusalem: Mossad Ha-Rav Kook, 1977–84); *Midrash Ha-Gadol on Genesis* (Jerusalem, 1947); *Aggadat Bereshit* (ed. S. Buber; Vilna: Romm, 1925 [1902]).

71. See next section below.

72. For an instructive contemporary account of some of the tensions between Greek 'science' and the rabbinic tradition, see the debates between the 'rabbi' and the 'philosopher' in Judah Ha-Levi's *Kuzari*, in *Three Jewish Philosophers* (ed. I. Heinemann; trans. H. Hirschfield; New York: Atheneum, 1979).

73. The precise relationship between kabbalah and Jewish philosophy is complex. The older view (e.g. D. Neumark) that kabbalah was a reaction to philosophy and offered a sort of inverted philosophy has been challenged (see Scholem on Neumark, *The Origins of Kabbalah* [Jerusalem: Schocken Books, 1948] [Hebrew]) and it does appear that many elements in kabbalah developed independently. The picture is confused, however, by the Hebrew style of the translations of Arabic works into Hebrew and the use of explicitly philosophical terminology by certain kabbalists, albeit often within a quite different context. There does seem some justification for arguing for viewing kabbalah as a reaction to a rationalizing tendency broader in scope than the explicitly philosophical works of Jewish scholars.

74. On the origins of kabbalah, see Scholem, *Origins*; and his *Major Trends in Jewish Mysticism* (New York: Schocken Books, 1941); *Kabbalah* (Jerusalem: Keter, 1974); and M. Idel, *Kabbalah: New Perspectives* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1988). There is a scholarly consensus, following Scholem, that the Spanish kabbalist, Moses de Leon (c. 1240–1305) was the author of the *Zohar* but there are still those who argue for the traditional view that de Leon merely made public the ancient texts of Shimon bar Yohai in his possession. For a typical example of this sort of argument, see A. Kaplan, *Meditation and Kabbalah* (York Beach, ME: Weiser, 1982), pp. 147ff. For translations of the *Zohar*, see the selections in I. Tishby, *The Wisdom of the Zohar* (trans. D. Goldstein; 3 vols.; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989); D. Matt, *Zohar: The Book of Enlightenment* (New York: Paulist Press, 1983).

75. *Sefirot* (Divine Emanations) from the Hebrew word, *mispar* (number). The model of ten *sefirot* is derived from *Sefer Yezirah* (fifth century?) where the *sefirot* are fundamental elements in the structure of creation. The kabbalistic tradition understands the ten *sefirot* to symbolize the dynamic exchanges in the Divine Emanations of the Godhead. For a helpful account, see Scholem, *Kabbalah*, pp. 96-116; Matt, *Zohar*, pp. 33ff.

76. Joseph Gikatilla interprets Gen. 2.19 ('This is its name') as the Secret Torah (Divine Wisdom)—'For Adam received it all in the kabbalah'; Abulafia taught that the 'secrets of each and every sefirah' were revealed to Adam; according to *Sefer Raziel*, this secret work was revealed by Raziel to Adam (p. 196). See Scholem, *Major Trends*, pp. 20ff., where he cites Meir ibn Gabbai's *Avodah Ha-Kodesh*, part 3 (1531) where this notion is developed; and *Zohar* 1.55a where the links between Adam and Rabbi Shimon (the reputed author of the *Zohar*) are traced. *The Book of Adam* (cf. Gen. 5.1) was often thought to be a reference to the original mystical text revealed to Adam.

77. This same text (Venice, 1566; cited in G. Scholem, *Sabbatai Zevi* [Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1973], pp. 47-48) also records, concerning the messianic restoration, 'And this is the *tikkun* of the world the restoration of all things in their pristine state, as they were before Adam sinned. For then all the worlds were perfectly balanced and co-ordinated, and the Great Name (God) was in perfect union with his glorious *Shekhinah*. But by Adam's sin the unity was disrupted. . . and the holy union sundered. . . ' (part 2, ch. 38).

78. This section draws on the perceptive article by Bezalel Safran, 'Rabbi Azriel and Rabbi Nahnamides: Two Views of the Fall of Man', in I. Twersky (ed.), *Rabbi Moses Nahmanides (Ramban): Explorations in his Religious and Literary Virtuosity* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1983), pp. 75-106. On Azriel, see Scholem, *Kabbalah*, pp. 391-93.

79. See Safran, pp. 76-81.

80. Cf. A. Altmann, 'The Motif of the "Shells" in Azriel of Gerona', *JJS* 9 (1959), pp. 73-80.

81. Cf. J. Dan and R.C. Kiener, *The Early Kabbalah* (New York: Paulist Press, 1986), pp. 87-108. Note that Safran (p. 890) suggests that the messiah will arise from the seven lower *sefirot* (i.e. be physical) and be restored to the original Adamic spiritual condition (cf. *Gen. R.* 12.6).

82. Nahmanides's two pertinent texts are *Perush Ha-Tambam al Ha-Torah* (ed. C.B. Chavel; 2 vols.; Jerusalem: Mossad Ha-Rav Kook, 1959); *Nahmanides: Commentary on the Torah* (trans. C.B. Chavel; 5 vols.; New York: Shilo, 1971); *Kitvei Ramban* (ed. C.B. Chavel; 2 vols.; Jerusalem: Mossad Ha-Rav Kook, 1960); *Writings and Discourses by Ramban* (trans. C.B. Chavel; 2 vols.; New York: Shilo, 1978). The relevant sections are *Commentary*, I, pp. 58-87 and *Shar Ha-Gemul*, in *Kitvei*, II, esp. pp. 280-309.

83. Cf. *Zohar* 2.152a where Rabbi Shimon says:

> Woe to the man who says that the Torah offers only stories and everyday words. If this were the case, we could write a Torah with better everyday words that was much better. . . all the words of Torah are deep words, deep secrets.

It is important to note, however, that Nahmanides insists on the literal meaning of the Genesis narrative with a physical Eden, etc.; see *Commentary* on Gen. 3.22.

84. *Commentary* on Gen. 2.20 where Nahmanides understands that Eve was created so that Adam would desire her. See *Commentary* on Deut. 32.26 where it is stated that the divine plan always included Adam's (humankind's) free will.

85. In his *Commentary* on Lev. 23.40, Nahmanides cites Gen. 3.6. He follows *Sefer Ha-Bahir* in reading the six species (a palm branch, three myrtle branches and two willow branches) and the citron (*etrog*) used on Sukkot (Tabernacles) as symbolizing the lower seven *sefirot*. The *etrog* symbolizes the *Shekhinah* and the bringing together of the six with the *etrog* represents the re-uniting of the *Shekhinah* with *Tiferet*. Nahmanides identifies the fruit of the Tree of Knowledge as the etrog and notes that the 'sin is in the *etrog* alone', that is the sin is the *Shekhinah's*. On 'cutting the shoots', see *Zohar* 1.12b and Scholem, *Major Trends*, pp. 404-405.

86. *Commentary* on Deut. 11.22; 26.19; Lev. 19.2; Gen. 18.1. Note that Nahmanides does recognize the special possibility of *devekut* with *Tiferet*.

87. *Kitvei*, I, pp. 374-75; *Commentary* on Lev. 18.7; 19.2; Deut. 11.22.

88. *Commentary* on Deut. 11.22; *Shaar*, p. 297.

89. Scholem identified three discrete strata in the *Zohar*:

[1] *Midrash Ha-Ne'elam* (which he dates c. end of thirteenth century);
[2] The major sections of the *Zohar* plus *Idra Rabba*, *Idra Zuta*, *Sitrei Torah* and the short treatises (which he holds to be later than [1]);
[3] *Raya Meheimna* and *Tikkunei Ha-Zohar* (which are later than the above).

He argues that [1] and [2] have a single author and [3] has a different single author (G. Scholem, *Zohar* [New York: Schocken Books, 1977], pp. 7-23).

90. In *Raya Meheimna* and *Tikkunei Ha-Zohar* the notion is developed that during the exile the world is governed by the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil, symbolizing the mixture of 'moral' forces and the struggle between them, but at the time of the redemption of the Tree of Life will dominate. 'Adam was indeed made on the pattern of the celestial image but he made a separation there, and was separated from there' (*Tikkunei Zohar* §56). *Tikkunei Ha-Zohar* (§69) is explicit concerning the consequences of Adam's sin. The sin took place in the divine mind (the *Sefirah*, *Keter*) and only as a result of the separation of the 'upper' and 'lower' worlds occasioned by Adam did 'God' become transcendent (separate from the world).

91. The *Shekhinah* aids the released forces of evil by becoming the vehicle for those forces attracted to her. 'Divorced' from *Tiferet*, Samael, strengthened by Israel's sins, attempts to seduce, dominate and defile her. The entire demonic world arose as a result of Adam's sin (*Zohar* 1.36b, 55a; 2.167b-168a, 178 a-b). The tales of the demon Lilith (Adam's first wife) are developed; see *Zohar* 1.14b, 34b, 54b; 2.96a, 111a; 3.19a, 76a. Drawing on Rabbi Isaac ben Jacob Ha-Kohen's *Treatise on the Left Emanation* (see J. Dan and R.C. Kiener, *The Early Kabbalah* [New York: Paulist Press, 1986], pp. 165-82; J. Dan, 'Samael, Lilith and the Concept of Evil in the Early Kabbalah', *Association of Jewish Studies Review* 5 [1980], pp. 17-40), the *Zohar* understands there to have been parallel to Adam and Eve another set of twins, Samael and Lilith (*Zohar* 1.148a-b). On Lilith, see R. Patai, *The Hebrew Goddess* (New York: Ktav, 1967), ch. 7.

92. The *Shekhinah* before Adam's sin symbolized the balance between *Gevurah* (Judgment) and *Hesed* (Love) but following her separation she is governed by *Gevurah*—strict judgment not alleviated by Love (the Tree of Death; it is written of the *Shekhinah* that 'her feet go down to Death' [Prov. 5.5], *Zohar* 1.223a). Only the

power of 'good' (the *sefirah Yesod*) can protect man from the *Shekhinah* (*Zohar* 35b).

93. The *Zohar* employs the earlier rabbinic distinction between 'Eden' and 'the Garden'—the former is the highest sphere of the 'supernal mother' and the latter, the '*Shekhinah* on earth' (*Zohar* 265a). On the descent of the spirit from the celestial Garden of Eden, see *Zohar* 2.13a-b.

94. For an example, see note 85, above. See also C.D. Matt, 'The Mystic and the Mizvot', in A. Green (ed.), *Jewish Spirituality*, I (London: SCM Press, 1985), pp. 367-404.

95. On the relationship between the body and the commandments, see P. Morris, 'The Embodied Text: Covenant and Torah', *Religion* 20 (1990), pp. 77-87. For an analysis of the kabbalistic understandings of Torah, see Scholem, *Kabbalah*, pp. 168-74; *idem*, 'The Meaning of Torah in Jewish Mysticism', in *On the Kabbalah and its Symbolism* (New York: Schocken Books, 1965), pp. 32-86; M. Idel, 'Infinities of Torah in Kabbalah', in Hartman and Budick (eds.), *Midrash and Literature*, pp. 127-57; and J. Katz, 'Post-Zoharic Relations between Halakhah and Kabbalah', in B.D. Cooperman (ed.), *Jewish Thought in the Sixteenth Century* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1983), pp. 283-307. Abulafia taught that the great secret of Adam and Eve was within all humans as the secret nature of 'matter and form' (see M. Idel, *Language, Torah, and Hermeneutics in Abraham Abulafia* [Albany, NY: SUNY Press], p. 118). On Adam and Eve, see also M. Idel, *Studies in Ecstatic Kabbalah* (Albany, NY: SUNY Press, 1988), pp. 37, 42, 127. On Lurianic kabbalah, see Scholem, *Major Trends*, pp. 275, 279-82, 305, 413 and his *Kabbalah*, pp. 162-64; L. Fine, *Safed Spirituality* (New York: Paulist Press, 1984), p. 67 on Luria's tenth rule of mystical piety based on Gen. 3.18. The central notion of 'exile' in Lurianic kabbalah is related to Adam's sin and the resultant scattering of the holy sparks of Adam's soul and of the *Shekhinah*. Moses Cordovero's (1522–1570) analysis of *teshuvah* (repentance) in relation to Cain discusses Adam's sin and its implications (see *The Palm Tree of Deborah* [trans. L. Jacobs; New York: Sepher-Hermon, 3rd edn, 1981], pp. 86-89). The sixteenth century scholar and commentator, Judah Moscato, who has utilized kabbalistic sources but was not a kabbalist, understood Adam to symbolize Israel (the human ideal) to whom God gave the Torah ('breathed' into him). God put him into the Garden (the land of Israel) and gave him access to the teachings of the Torah (the Tree of Life) and warned him against the other Tree (idolatry). For the understanding of Adam in the Sabatean movement, see G. Scholem, *Sabbatai Zevi* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1973), pp. 320-21. On Hasidism, see Scholem, *Major Trends*, p. 90; M. Idel, *Kabbalah: New Perspectives* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1988), pp. 65-66.

96. See the perceptive essay by F. Talmage, 'Apples of Gold: The Inner Meaning of Sacred Text in Medieval Judaism', in A. Green (ed.), *Jewish Spirituality*, I (London: SCM Press, 1985), pp. 313-55; M. Saperstein, *A Thirteenth Century Commentary on the Aggadah* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1980).

97. On the nature of *peshat*, refer to R. Loewe, 'The "Plain" Meaning of

Scripture in Early Jewish Exegesis', *Papers of the Institute of Jewish Studies* 1 (1964), pp. 140-85.

98. See, for example, B. Herring, *Joseph ibn Kaspi's Gevia' Kesef: A Study in Medieval Jewish Biblical Commentary* (New York: Ktav, 1982), author's introduction.

99. 'I would therefore say in general that whenever there is encountered. . . in scripture. . . an expression pertaining to the description of our Creator or to His handiwork which stands in contradiction to the requirement of *sound reason*, there can be no doubt that that expression was meant to be taken in a figurative sense. . . ' (Saadiah Gaon, *The Book of Beliefs and Opinions* [2.3] [trans. S. Rosenblatt; New Haven: Yale University Press, 1948], p. 100). 'We Israelites always keep to the literal sense unless it is contradicted by the observation of the senses, as in. . . Eve is the not the "mother of all living" but only of all men' (Gaon, *Beliefs*, 7.1).

100. Abraham Ibn Ezra (1089–1167), grammarian, poet, liturgist, and author of *Commentary on the Torah* (ed. H. Weizer; Jerusalem: Mossad Ha-Rav Kook, 1976). In his introduction, Ibn Ezra outlines the then current four methods of interpretation, rejecting each in turn in favour of the fifth, his own. He rejects:

(1) interpolations on sundry (anything under the sun!) matters;
(2) the neo-Sadducean (he uses the term, 'Sadducees') literalism of the Karaites, claiming that the rabbinic traditions are vital for our understanding of Scripture, which also have their origins at Sinai;
(3) allegory, insisting on the 'plain' meaning, except where Scripture itself entails allegory—one of the examples he gives is that of the Tree of Knowledge ('eating' knowledge), which he contends 'can only be understood in a figurative sense' as it is 'evident on the surface'. He notes that the allegorists are right about one thing 'every word and law, large or small has to be weighed in the scales of the heart', that is (for him) in human reason which is rooted in divine wisdom;
(4) the later midrashic collections and midrashic exposition which mistakes poetic eisegesis for the text.

His own method includes the grammatical investigation of every word in its context; the denial of any significance to the full or defective written form of words; reliance on the Targum ('even if he is addicted to the midrashim we note that he was even more devoted to the true sense of Hebrew language'); and even if the 'Torah has seventy faces' the plain sense must be accepted *unless* it contradicts a 'law' received from the rabbinic tradition.

Although there are obvious links between his Neoplatonism and the modes of his biblical exegesis, he is particularly careful not to 'come clean' on philosophical interpretations. For example, he claims that the four elements have no end but is noncommittal about their origins, and, in connection with the paradise story, he informs us that it has a deeper meaning but does not tell us what it is! The standard rabbinic Bible, *Mikra'ot Gedolot* (New York: Pardes, 1951), includes the Hebrew biblical text together with *Targum Onqelos* (second century CE); *Targum Jonathan* (c.

seventh century CE); Rashi; Ibn Ezra; Nahmanides; and Sforno, and dates from the sixteenth century.

101. Rashbam = Rabbi Samuel ben Meir (died c. 1174), who in his Torah commentary (*Perush al Ha-Torah* [ed. D. Rosin; Breslau, 1882; New York, 1949] ET: *Rabbi Samuel Ben Meir's Commentary on Genesis* [trans. M.I. Lockshin; Lewiston, NY: Edwin Mellen, 1989]) frequently seeks to correct his grandfather's (Rashi) midrashic accounts in favour of the *peshat* (e.g. on Gen. 1.26). He writes that he was eighteen and had studied the entire Talmud before he realized that the text never loses its *peshat* (*Commentary* on *b. Shab.* 63a). Even this 'scientific' commentator, who insists that midrashic exegesis is not the true plain meaning, contended that midrash was the primary meaning intended by God (Lockshin, *Commentary*, p. 13). Unfortunately, his text from Genesis 1–18 has been lost. See also the *Commentary on the Torah* (6 vols.; Warsaw, 1861–62; Jerusalem: Bnei Arbel, 1956–64) of Isaac Abravanel (1437–1508). Even though he utilizes the method of comparative grammar in his search for the *peshat* and opposes midrashic interpretations as 'they do not fit the plain meaning of the verses', Abravanel employs the characteristic midrashic reading of associated series of identifications. For example, commenting on Gen. 11, he offers a city-dweller's lament for the good life by a detailed linking of the sin of Adam, with that of Cain, and the generation of the dispersion (Babel)—the rejection of the better life of the nomadic shepherd for the life of the sinful city ('distracted by the promise of fulfilled desires and deeds of fame'). He interprets the four rivers as the four elements and the four realms of nature—mineral, vegetable, animal and spiritual; the serpent as the dangerous powers of the imagination, and the Tree of Life as the perception of the intelligible. In his commentary on Gen. 3.22 (p. 22a), Abravanel develops a 'typology' (Adam = Israel, where the breath of God = Torah and the Garden of Eden = the Land of Israel; cf. *Gen. R.* 19.9). Abravanel is concerned that the issuing of a commandment (2.16) necessarily entails both free will and the knowledge of good and evil (as befitting one made in 'the image and likeness' of God). So what was the knowledge that followed from eating of the forbidden tree? His answer is that before their sin this knowledge was intellectual and unconnected with motives and desires. He continues, glossing 'eating' as 'indulgence' and 'the knowledge of good and evil' as 'the indulgence in and study of worldly things' which leads to 'spiritual death'. The 'message' of the text is that we must cultivate Eden (= our soul) and guard it from the influences of the Tree of Knowledge (= the perception of the political sphere). Here, Adam in his natural state is good and innocent but becomes corrupted by the society of the town and city. On this basis he launches into a sustained attack on civilized life as a rebellion against God, a situation that will only be remedied when 'natural' life is reestablished in messianic times.

102. Sforno (Obadiah ben Jacob Sforno, died 1550), in his commentary on the Torah, presents the peshatic interpretation, but as with other *pashtanim* he works hard to reject the inherited derashic tradition (citing it often and thus preserving it!). So, on Gen. 3.1 he cites the talmudic identification of the serpent with Satan (*b. B. Bat.* 16a) only to dismiss it as 'figurative', he continues with each mention of the snake to render the verses to relate to humankind (e.g. 3.15—the lustful person ['you will bruise'] will harm himself ['his heel']). Also, some of his 'literal' readings

are strange—the enmity in 3.15 is mainly between men and women and includes their respective offspring.

103. Rabbi David Kimhi (Radak, 1160–1235), grammarian and peshatic commentator (*Commentary on the Torah* [ed. M. Kamelhar; Jerusalem: Mossad Ha Rav Kook, 1970]; see F. Talmage, *David Kimhi: The Man and his Commentaries* [Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1975]). His interpretations were greatly influenced by mediaeval Jewish philosophy. For example, he 'reads' the Garden of Eden as referring to the active intellect, the Tree of Life as the human intellect, and the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil as the material intellect. He focuses on Adam as the examplar of exile, a condition he ascribes to all men not just Israel. He notes that the rabbis understand Gen. 2.15 figuratively as 'working' in the Torah and 'keeping' the commandments but understands it to mean, 'To work refers to study; to keep it refers to guarding one's mind against those rebellious and corrupt so that (God) be remembered and kept in mind constantly' (cited in Talmage, *Kimhi*, p. 156).

104. Hizzekuni (Hezekiah ben Manoah), the thirteenth-century biblical interpreter, draws heavily on Rashi. In *Hizzekuni* (the title of his commentary and the usual way of referring to its author) on Gen. 2.16, he rejects the idea that God was testing Adam and advocates that the purpose of the first commandment was to teach the angels to limit their support for the first human. Hizzekuni wants to know why Adam was not forbidden to eat of the Tree of Life, and whether he did so. He speculates that:

(1) there was just not time;
(2) the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil and the Tree of Life are antidotes for each other, and he was not allowed the second cure;
(3) Adam (following the Targum) could only have got to the Tree of Life after eating of the other Tree, as the Tree of Knowledge surrounded the Tree of Life;
(4) Adam ate from the Tree of Life but immortality can be counteracted by sin, and following the eating of the other Tree he knew what was sinful.

Further he asks why God, only after Adam had eaten from the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil was intent on preventing him from eating of the Tree of Life. He concludes that if Adam had then eaten from the Tree of life he would have lived forever as a sinner, that is, the issue is not immortality but sin.

105. Jacob ben Asher (died c. 1340), the author of the authoritative legal code, the *Turim*, used the numerological (*gematria*, one of the midrashic modes of exegesis) method in his commentary on the Pentateuch, allowing him great scope for midrashic expositions.

106. Rashi = Rabbi Shlomo ben Isaac (1040–1105). His commentary to the Pentateuch became, and still is, the standard biblical 'textbook'. Rashi's incorporation of midrashic themes maintained and legitimated their almost automatic association with the biblical text, although often he merely refers to the midrashim—'the rabbis already collected them in *Genesis Rabbah* and other works' (on Gen. 3.8). It should be noted that he rejected some midrashic interpretations, and used philological

analyses. It might be said that his *peshat* is an admixture of *peshat* and *derash*, invoking the *derash* to counter textual difficulties (*Pentateuch with Targum Onkelos, Haphtoroth and Prayers for Sabbath and Rashi's Commentary*. I. *Genesis* (trans. M. Rosenbaum and A.M. Silberman; London: Shapiro Vallentine, 1929). His commentary on Gen. 3 is a useful anthology of earlier interpretations. We might note his comment on 3.22, 'and if he lives forever, he might come to mislead other creatures to say that he too is divine', interpreted by later commentators as a rationale for God's action (e.g. Mizrahi [Elijah Mizrahi, c. 1450–1526, author of a commentary on Rashi's biblical commentary], 'For if not, why should God have cared whether he lives forever?'). More recently Rashi's comment has been used to suggest that it is not human immortality that is problematic in itself but only the purposes to which it is put (see, for example, A. Rosenfeld, 'Does the Halakhah Impose Limits on Scientific Research?', in H. Schimmel and A. Carmell [eds.], *Encounter: Essays on Torah and Modern Life* [New York: Feldheim, 1989], pp. 130-38).

107. Solomon ben Judah ibn Gabirol (1021–1054) offers a much too neat but rather ingenious allegorical account (it appears at the expense of the literal altogether) of the Eden story in which the elements of Neoplatonic metaphysics find exact parallels in Genesis: 'I shall now reveal to you the mystery of the Garden. . . '—Eden = the upper sphere (divine element); the garden = the highest spiritual sphere; the river = primordial matter, its four heads = the four elements; the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil = lust (sexual inclination); the Tree of Life = (intellectual knowledge of God); Adam = the rational soul, Eve = the animal soul (as the Hebrew might be read), and the serpent = the craving (vegetative) soul (the three souls); the garments of skin = the physical body; the angels = the intelligible beings of the upper world; etc. The 'descent' of the Spirit is overcome by its ascent through the knowledge of God (cited in M. Friedlander, *Essays on the Writings of Ibn Ezra* [Jerusalem: Mitzhuf, 1964 (1877)], p. 40, quoted in C. Sirat, *A History of Jewish Philosophy in the Middle Ages* [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985], p. 79).

108. Levi ben Gershon (Gersonides, 1288–1344), in his *Commentary on the Torah*, gives an explanation of words and phrases and presents an explanation of each section outlining the 'lessons'. He takes the Eden story (14a-d) literally, at one level, in that he argues that man's domination of woman is based on the notion that man is the cause of woman as given in the biblical text and that the parable (*mashal*) of the four rivers corresponds to the world's physical rivers. The lesson is that God teaches man how to overcome bodily existence and achieve eternal life (paradise) by realizing the highest levels of his soul. This takes place as man realizes ideas in (with) his material intellect (the garden) which emanated from the 'active intellect' (God, here symbolized by Eden). This all takes place in the lower world (the Tree of Life) where the rivers symbolize the transforming effect of the material intellect on the other faculties of the soul (the serpent symbolizing the faculty of imagination). The Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil is the order of conventional values, and the flaming sword represents the lightning flash of the insight of the active intellect. The angels are the forms of the intelligible. These themes occur again and again in various permutations in the philosophical re-structurings of the Genesis narrative,

each in accord with the particular 'metaphysics' of the philosopher concerned. See note 101 above on Abravanel as one such example. It is interesting to note that the philosopher, Hasdai Crescas (c. 1412), accepts a version of 'original sin' but understood humankind's inherited sin from Adam to be countered by Abraham (a new creation) and the covenant of circumcision. Israel ben Moses Levi (Maestro Profiat Duran, Efodi, fourteenth–fifteenth century), was the author of an anti-Christian work (*Do Not Be as your Fathers*, c. 1395) which was actually disseminated by Christians not realizing its satirical tone until this was exposed in a commentary (c. 1450) and it was banned. Efodi writes:

> Be not as your fathers, who by close scrutiny tried to find a deep philosophical meaning in the account of creation, and who had much to disclose about the first human couple, about the four rivers, the Tree of Knowledge, the serpent, and the coats of skin which the Lord made for clothing. Not so thou! Conceive all this literally! Add, however, yet another inner punishment to Adam's misfortune, increase through it the burden of his bitter fate that he has to carry on his back. He will never get rid of it, and is entirely in the grip of Satan, until the Redeemer comes and purifies him by his death. Now that sin is abolished, although it is not mentioned in our holy Scripture, while the other curses, the punishments of hell remain forever. . . Stick to the mystery of hereditary sin which the head of the apostles proclaimed, he whose name is identical with that of thy teacher. Thy reward will grow immensely like thy faith (*Letters of Jews through the Ages*, I [trans. F. Kobler; Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1952], p. 278).

109. Moses Maimonides, *The Guide of the Perplexed* (trans. S. Pines; Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1963).

110. For analyses of this chapter (*Guide* 1.2), see L. Berman, 'Maimonides on the Fall of Man', *Association of Jewish Studies Review* 5 (1980), pp. 1-15; S. Schwarzschild, 'Moral Radicalism and "Middlingness" in the Ethics of Maimonides', *Studies in Medieval Culture* 11 (1978), pp. 65-94; W.Z. Harvey, 'Maimonides and Spinoza on the Knowledge of Good and Evil', *Iyyun* 28 (1979), pp. 167-85 (Hebrew); R.L. Weiss, 'Introduction', in R.L. Weiss and C. Butterworth (eds.), *Ethical Writings of Maimonides* (New York: Dover, 1975). Maimonides' argument seems a bit weak in that the parallel verse to Gen. 3.5 is Gen. 3.22—'And the Lord God said, Behold the man is become (as) one of us, to know good and evil. . . '—thus God appears to confirm that the divine likeness is intended. Also, while Maimonides is right that Gen. 3.5 is indeed 'the dictum of scripture', it is, in fact, uttered by the serpent.

111. The learned man offers the parallel myth of a disobedient criminal who became a 'star in heaven' and it might be thus mythic (Gnostic?) 'reading' of Scripture that provokes Maimonides' response (see note 112).

112. Before launching his counter-offensive, Maimonides rather ungraciously accuses his opponent of reading Scripture as history of poetry and of saying the first thing that entered his head during a break from 'drinking and copulating'.

113. See Berman, 'Maimonides', pp. 9-10 for a helpful discussion of the Aristotelian character of this distinction.

114. Maimonides' apparent negativity to the social and political spheres is countered by later sections in the *Guide* (e.g. 2.40) where his philosopher–prophet

version of the Platonic philosopher–king addresses these issues from the perspective of wisdom.

115. See *Guide* 1.24 for Maimonides' figurative interpretation of the 'voice' and not God (Gen. 3.8).

116. That this verse (Job 14.20) is taken from *Genesis Rabbah*, and thus an indicator of Maimonides' habitual reading of the biblical text together with its midrashic interpretation, is missed by Pines (in his notes to the translation) and by Berman ('Maimonides'). On Maimonides' 'habitual reading', see the discussion of *Guide* 2.30, below.

117. Berman ('Maimonides') does not refer to *Guide* 2.30 in his presentation of Maimonides' account of the 'fall of man' and although he claims to give the 'philosophical' interpretation he actually presents the 'external' rather than the 'internal' interpretation of the Genesis text.

118. Israeli education policies have stressed the ideologically informed teaching of the Hebrew Bible but only in recent years, except for a few exceptions, the traditional rabbinic texts.

119. See J.B. Agus, *Banner of Jerusalem* (New York: Bloch, 1946). Kook also argues that the evolutionary process will 'return' man to his 'greatness. . . when he dwelt with God. . . in the Garden of Eden' (B.Z. Bokser (trans.), *Abraham Isaac Kook* [New York: Paulist Press, 1978], p. 231) and that the earth which is included in God's curses will likewise be finally redeemed (*Kook*, pp. 59-60, alluding to *Gen. R.* 5.9).

120. The Genesis text has played a large part in the debates concerning the role and status of Jewish women, on the part both of the feminists and the male rabbinic apologists. On the latter for example, see E. Berkovits, *Crisis and Faith* (New York: Sanhedrin Press, 1976), and his *Jewish Woman in Time and Torah* (New York: Ktav, 1990), pp. 18-40. On the difficulties of the re-interpretation of the story of Adam and Eve by Jewish feminists, see J. Plaskow, *Standing Again at Sinai* (San Francisco: Harper Collins, 1990). She argues that Gen. 2 and 3 are 'ideological justifications for patriarchy' and that the fact that 'Eve, seeker of wisdom and the "mother of all living"' is created from Adam's rib is a clear example of the 'patriarchal inversion' of the realities of biology (p. 42). As do a number of non-Jewish feminists (e.g. P. Trible, *God and the Rhetoric of Sexuality* [Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1978], ch. 2), Plaskow contrasts the garden in Eden with that of the Song of Songs, although she notes that it does not do much for traditional Jewish notions of marriage (p. 199). Her response to the inherent 'patriarchy' of Genesis is to retell the Eve story ('The Coming of Lilith: Towards a Feminist Theology', in C.P. Christ and J. Plaskow [eds.], *Womanspirit Rising: A Feminist Reader in Religion* [San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1979], pp. 198-209). See also the analysis of the interpretation of Gen. 3.16 (Babylonian Talmud, Rashi, Ibn Ezra and Nahmanides) in R. Biale, *Woman and Jewish Law* (New York: Schocken Books, 1984), pp. 121-25.

121. Buber and Rosenzweig would fit into this category, arguing for life outside the Garden as the beginnings of 'adulthood'. Buber also considered the expulsion from Eden as a blessing and not a punishment. An excellent example of a

psychological reading of the 'fall upwards' is to be found in E. Fromm, *You Shall Be as Gods: A Radical Interpretation of the Old Testament and its Tradition* (London: Jonathan Cape, 1967). Fromm's reading is particularly attractive in that it both draws creatively on midrashic materials and constructs an interpretation that is 'biblical' in scope.

122. None have the impact in the present on the Jewish community that midrashic, kabbalistic and philosophically minded commentaries have had in the past (and for some still do so). One of the most widely used commentaries in the Jewish community in recent years has been J. Hertz, *The Pentateuch and Haftorahs* (London: Soncino, 1936; 2nd edn, 1975). This commentary by the late Chief Rabbi included references to non-Jewish scholars, extensive 'critical' comments and short notes (on the Garden of Eden, see pp. 195-96; 'Instead of the Fall of Man, Judaism teaches the Rise of Man; and instead of Original Sin, it stresses Original Virtue', p. 196). It is the very success of this commentary and its wide-spread influence in the English-speaking world, particularly in introducing the Jewish public to modern biblical scholarship, that is one of the prime motivations behind more recent alternatives, see notes 123ff., below. It is important to note that, in the sixteenth century, Jewish scholars began to give positive account of the exile in terms of God's purpose (missions to mankind, etc.) and that this development is intimately related to the new reading of Adam's 'fall upwards' (see S. Rosenberg, 'Exile and Redemption in Jewish Thought in the Sixteenth Century: Contending Conceptions', in B.D. Cooperman [ed.], *Jewish Thought in the Sixteenth Century* [Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1983], pp. 399-403).

123. The general editors are Rabbis Nosson Scherman and Meir Zlotwitz and the series, planned to run to more than fifty volumes, is published by Mesorah Publications, New York (1976ff.).

124. *Bereishis/Genesis: A New Translation with a Commentary Anthologized from Talmudic, Midrashic and Rabbinic Sources*, I (Sidrah Bereishis/Sidrah Noach <Genesis 1–11>, 2nd edn) (trans. and commentary Rabbi Meir Zlotowitz, with 'overviews' by Rabbi Nosson Scherman; New York: Mesorah, 1980).

125. *Bereishis/Genesis*, pp. 13-26; based on *Mikhtav Me-Eliyahu*, I, by Rabbi Eliyahu Eliezer Dessler (1892–1954) (ed. A. Carmell and A. Halpern; London, 1955).

126. Although they steadfastly refuse even to mention Hertz's name there are many obvious references to the dangers of his commentary. It is interesting to note that the Artscroll Tanach Series represents an example of a contemporary Jewish 'fundamentalist' hermeneutic. 'Fundamentalist' in the (Jewish) sense of the literal truth of selected rabbinic sources, in addition to the biblical text. On the scholarly inadequacies (philological, textual and translation errors), of this series, see B.B. Levy, 'Our Torah, your Torah, and their Torah', in H. Joseph *et al.* (eds.), *Truth and Compassion* (Studies in Religion Supplement, 12; Waterloo, Canada: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 1983), pp. 137-90. In a strange way the modern Israeli phenomenon of the regional and national Bible quizzes come closer to the tradition than the Artscroll materials, in that recent questions, such as name seven trees in the Bible, ask that we consider the text in a particularly traditional way!

THE TREES OF EDEN IN MEDIAEVAL ICONOGRAPHY

Jennifer O'Reilly

Early Christian traditions of illustrating the story of the Garden of Eden have been largely reconstructed from their surviving mediaeval derivatives. The Cotton Genesis, a fifth- or early sixth-century Greek manuscript, was almost destroyed by fire in 1731, but four sumptuous Carolingian Bibles remain whose Genesis frontispieces are descended from the family of manuscripts to which the Cotton Genesis belonged.[1] The four ninth-century works make independent selections from the Early Christian cycle and adapt its illustrations (which originally appeared within the biblical text) to fit three or four horizontal registers on a single page. If all these scenes are added up, they suggest the original cycle may have illustrated sixteen episodes from the Creation of Adam to the Expulsion (Gen. 2.7–3.24), but eleventh- and twelfth-century derivatives of other, now lost, Carolingian works, or of Early Christian manuscripts, suggest there may have been even more, perhaps nineteen separate scenes.[2] In addition to reflecting classical iconography in the depiction of the serpent and the creator's Promethean moulding of Adam, they include several extrabiblical features which Herbert Kessler has shown also occur in the apocryphon *Life of Adam and Eve*, although controversy continues as to whether such elements of Jewish exegesis and legend were transmitted to the Early Christian cycle through a shared literary tradition or through a Jewish pictorial cycle into which the image of the beardless creator-logos was inserted.[3] The Cotton Genesis depicts the creator with a cross-nimbus and a cross-sceptre, details repeated in the thirteenth-century mosaics in the atrium of San Marco, Venice which were probably excerpted from the Cotton Genesis itself.[4] An entire cupola is devoted to the opening chapters of Genesis, with the outer of three concentric rings of scenes depicting Gen. 2.20–3.24 in twelve episodes. Not only are some of the original extrabiblical features reproduced, such as the depiction of the *lignum scientiae* as a fig tree, but other details, drawn from a mediaeval iconography, are inserted. It is clear that even pictures which originated in extraordinarily detailed textual illustration do not simply illustrate the text.

In the later Middle Ages, the story of Eden was also pictured in sequence outside the context of the text, translations or paraphrases of Genesis. The Bedford Book of Hours (B.L. Add. Ms. 18 150) c. 1423, for example, narrates nine episodes from the naming of the animals to the exile of Cain within a single miniature (Plate 1). As in the *Life of Adam and Eve* and the Early Christian illustrative tradition represented by the Carolingian Genesis frontispieces, an angel rather than the creator expels Adam and Eve from paradise, although he is here identified as the archangel Michael and equipped with fifteenth-century plate armour. In the well-known apocryphal *Gospel of Nicodemus*, Michael is described as the keeper of the gate of paradise who assured the exiled Adam's son, Seth, that Christ would come and deliver Adam.[5] As in many later mediaeval representations, the serpent is shown with a human head, the mirror image of Eve, 'because like attracts like', as Petrus Comestor had explained in the twelfth century, supposedly quoting Bede. This reference has never been traced, but the sixth-century Syriac compilation of earlier materials, the *Book of the Cave of Treasures*, describes the serpent calling Eve by name, 'and when she turned round towards him, she saw her own form reflected in him'.[6] In addition to these archaeological strata of accumulated extrabiblical details, the miniature in the Bedford Book of Hours also reveals contemporary late mediaeval preoccupations, for example, with the doctrine of grace and the intermediary role of the Church, reflected in its image of the four rivers of paradise emanating from a baptismal *fons vitae* of truly Gothic cathedral dimensions. In the Early Christian cycle the creator is pictured as the logos; here he is shown as the Trinity, in the Janus-headed figure of the Father and the Son surmounted by the living flame of the Holy Spirit. Two extra scenes are inserted into the Genesis story: the triune creator gazes on the dead body of Adam, exiled from paradise, and bears him up in his arms. Significantly, in this last scene alone, the creator is shown with the single face of the Father and flame of the Spirit, for the logos has put on the form of Adam's flesh and lies in the Father's arms like an image of the Pietà. The prone body of the first Adam shows the death by sin passed upon all men, but he is also, literally, 'the figure of him that was to come'. The gift of grace pours abundantly through the portals of Eden in the paradisal waters of baptism,

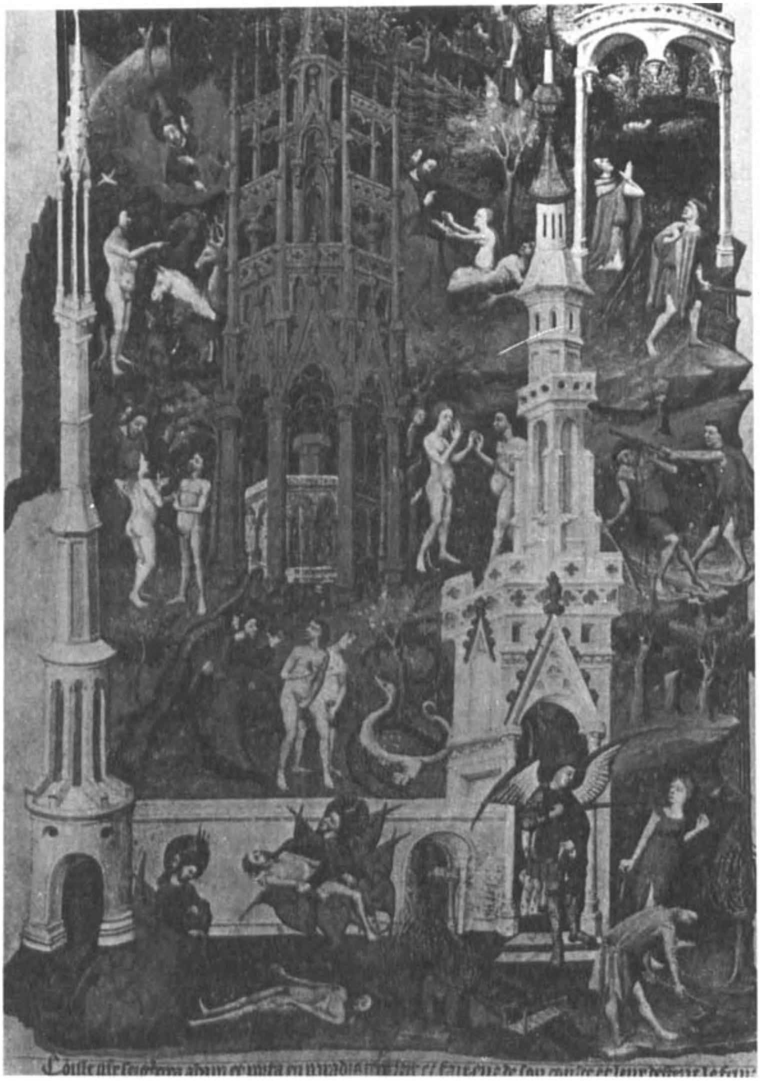

Plate 1. The Bedford Book of Hours, c. 1423. London, British Library, Add. Ms 18150, f. 14.

signifying death unto sin and the old man, and entry into newness of life. This tableau provides a pictorial meditation on St Paul's view of the Fall and atonement which was of particular interest in the fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries (Rom. 5.12-15; 6.1-6).

Most mediaeval pictorial allusions to Eden, however, occur outside the context of Genesis manuscripts or the detailed illustration of the whole story. Freed from even the relative constraints of textual illustration and narrative sequence and seen through the filter of changing contemporary interests, the compelling myth was constantly reformulated, excerpted, juxtaposed with other material and adapted to a wide variety of contexts, as the example of the image of the two trees in Gen. 2.9 may show.

1. *The Tree of Life*

The ancient Near Eastern image of the Tree of Life was of a cosmological tree, rooted in the underworld, the trunk passing through the centre of the earth, its branches reaching to the heavens and supporting the constellations, its fruit offering healing and immortality.[7] In the Eastern churches in the early Christian centuries, this Tree of Life was readily identified with the cross, and therefore with Christ himself, and the life-giving fruits with the eucharist. Patristic exegesis on the Tree of Life 'in the midst of the garden' (Gen. 2.9) was expanded by apocryphal and legendary materials, some of which appears in the *Book of the Cave of Treasures*:

> That tree of life which was in the midst of paradise prefigured the redeeming Cross, which is the veritable Tree of Life, and this it is that was fixed in the middle of the world.[8]

In Jewish cosmology Jerusalem was the centre of the world and the axial tree an image of kingship (Dan. 4.10-14; Ezek. 17.22-24). The unfading tree with medicinal fruits was also an eschatological image, visualized as planted in the midst of the earth on the right side of the new temple by the waters of life in Ezek. 47.1, 12. Jewish Scripture and legend joined the common Near Eastern myth of the cosmic, life-giving tree to the messianic hope of a return to paradise.[9] These ideas were taken up by the writer of the Apocalypse in his culminating vision of the New Jerusalem, the heavenly paradise, where the Tree of Life, bearing healing fruits, stands eternally beside the water of life proceeding out of the throne of God and the Lamb (Rev. 22.1-2).

Christian exegesis of Ps. 73.12 ('For God is my king of old, working salvation in the midst of the earth') also helped form the tradition that Jerusalem and its Holy Places commemorating the site of Christ's crucifixion, burial and resurrection was the very centre of the earth, a tradition quoted by Adomnan of Iona in the late seventh century, and followed by Bede, in recounting the eyewitness description of the Holy Places by the pilgrim Arculf.[10]

The apsidal mosaic in the Roman basilica of San Clemente, based on an Early Christian iconographic type of the fifth or sixth century, shows the assimilation of the Near Eastern image of the Tree of Life to Christian purposes (Plate 2). The stylized acanthus vegetation of the world tree spans heaven and earth in vine-like scrolls. Two liturgical lamps flank its main trunk. Men, beasts and birds seek its shade and fruit. The sacrament of baptism is shown by the water of life issuing from the base of the tree/cross in the form of the four rivers of paradise which flowed out of Eden. Thirsting harts, the image of the soul longing for God (Ps. 42.1) and often featured in the decoration of early baptisteries, drink from the water of life. Below them stand the Lamb and the celestial city.[11] In a single image the cross, erected on Golgotha in the historical city of Jerusalem at a particular moment in time, is here revealed as the eternal cosmic Tree of Life, prefigured from the beginning in Eden and finally revealed in all its glory in the heavenly paradise of the New Jerusalem. The liturgical context of the image is important in showing that the fruits of this tree are continually available to the faithful—at the eucharistic altar below the mosaic.

The multi-faceted identity of the Tree of Life was pictorially represented in a great variety of ways. A relief carved on the inside of a sixth-century alabaster throne-shaped reliquary from the eastern Mediterranean shows the Tree of Life with the four paradisal rivers pouring from the baptismal font at its base.[12] It is attended by the four beasts of the Evangelists: as the four rivers of Eden watered the four quarters of the earth so, in exegesis, the four Gospels issuing from a single source were seen as watering the whole Church (Plate 3). The tree is not simply the Tree of Life in Eden, however. Carved on the sides and the reverse of the throne, the beasts, who are each shown with six wings, also represent the four living creatures who surround the throne of the slain and glorified Lamb in perpetual adoration (Rev. 4.6-8; 5.6-9). The reliquary itself forms the throne of the Lamb. The apparently curious juxtaposition of the tree and four rivers of Eden with the image of the Lamb on the throne results from

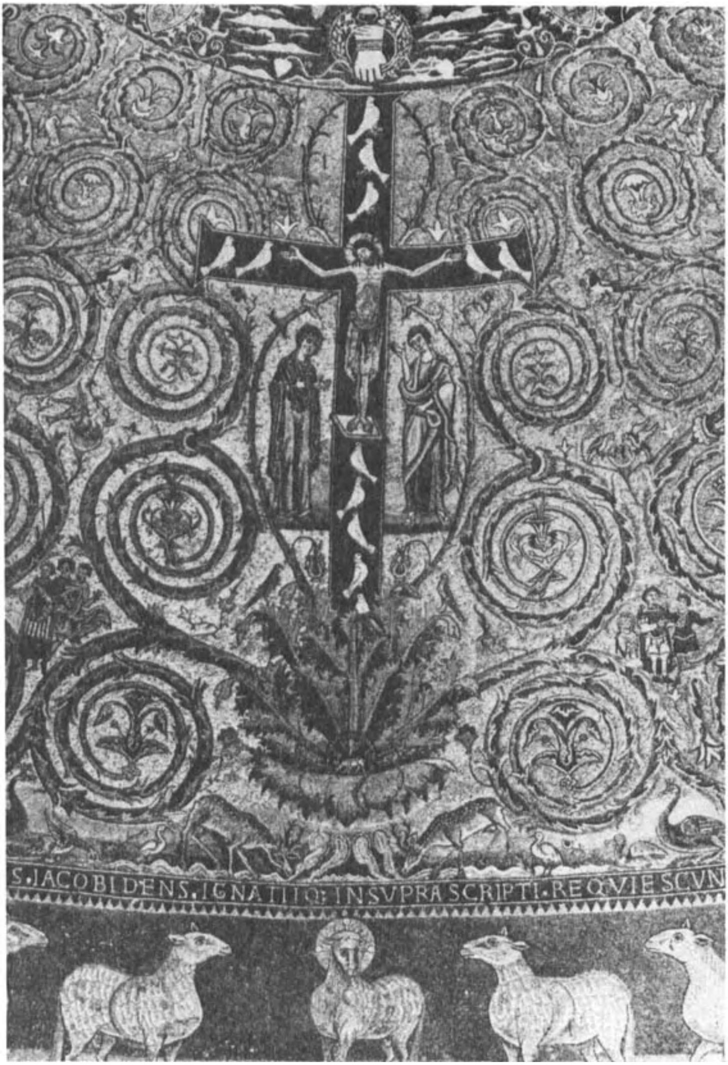
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Plate 2. Apsidal mosaic, San Clemente, Rome.

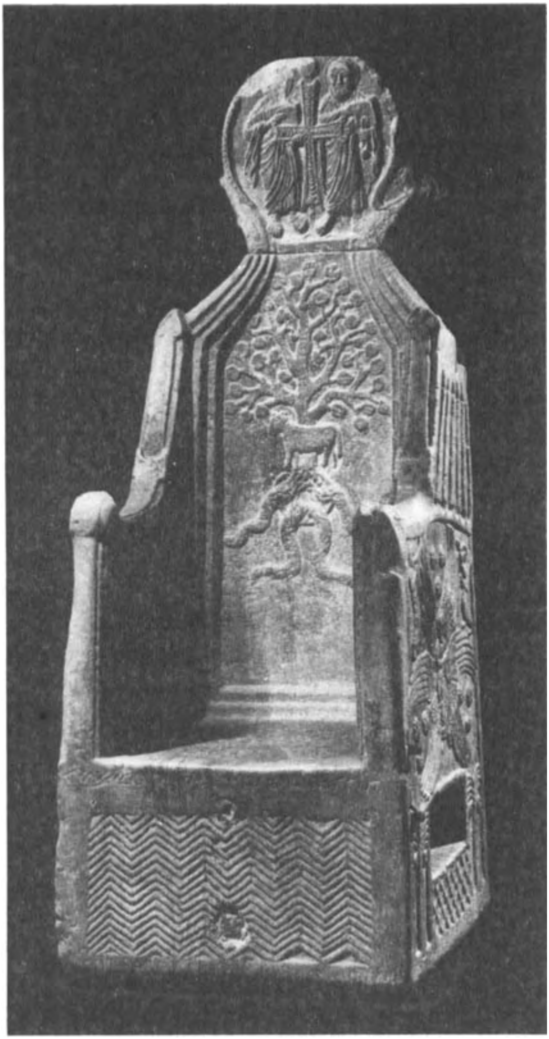


Plate 3. Throne-reliquary, 6th century, Treasury of San Marco, Venice.

an imaginative telescoping of three texts. In addition to the imagery of Gen. 2.9-10 and Revelation 4 and 5 already noted, it incorporates the vision of the Tree of Life and water of life proceeding out of the throne of the Lamb in the heavenly paradise in Rev. 22.1-3. The lighted tapers carved on each arm of the throne, flanking the image, probably allude to the divine light accompanying the vision (v. 5). Immediately above this paradisal and eschatological tree, and identified with it, is the cross. Surmounting the throne and attended by saints, the jewelled cross recalls the commemorative cross clad in precious metal, erected for pilgrims on the cult site of Golgotha at the imagined centre of the earth and echoed in the *exaltatio crucis* depicted on many Early Christian works as a celebration of the exalted body of Christ. It seems probable that a relic of the True Cross was once enthroned in the reliquary whose iconography, function and very shape provide an exposition of the royal *lignum vitae.*

That the exalted body of Christ is to be identified with the Tree of Life (in Eden, on Golgotha and in the heavenly paradise) is graphically demonstrated in an esoteric and archaizing miniature following the Gospel canon tables in an eleventh-century Reichenau manuscript (Munich, Staatsbibl. Clm. 4454, f. 20v; Plate 4). The tree spans heaven and earth as the universal axis. Christ's body literally forms its entire trunk, his hand grasps its branches. In his other hand he holds an orb and is flanked by classical personifications of the sun and moon, symbols of the centre and of his cosmic sovereignty; they are often included in the iconography of the crucifixion, which is additionally alluded to here by Christ's stance and his outstretched arms. He is, however, 'clothed with a garment down to the foot' as in the opening apocalyptic vision of his glory (Rev. 1.13) and pictured in the midst of the seven-branched tree in a glory of divine light. The tree rises from an Atlas-like but female personification of the waters of the *fons vitae.* Issuing from this single source, the four rivers of Eden are shown at the four corners of the earth. Like caryatids, the personifications of the rivers support the four beasts of the Evangelists who all turn towards the central mandorla, as in the traditional iconography of the *Majestas Domini*, showing the four apocalyptic creatures about the divine throne (Rev. 4.5-9). The object of their adoration, Christ 'enthroned' on the Tree of Life above the water of life, recalls the further eschatological image of Rev. 22.1-3. The paradoxical concept of the crucified reigning from the tree was familiar from Fortunatus's Good Friday hymn, *Pange lingua*, which

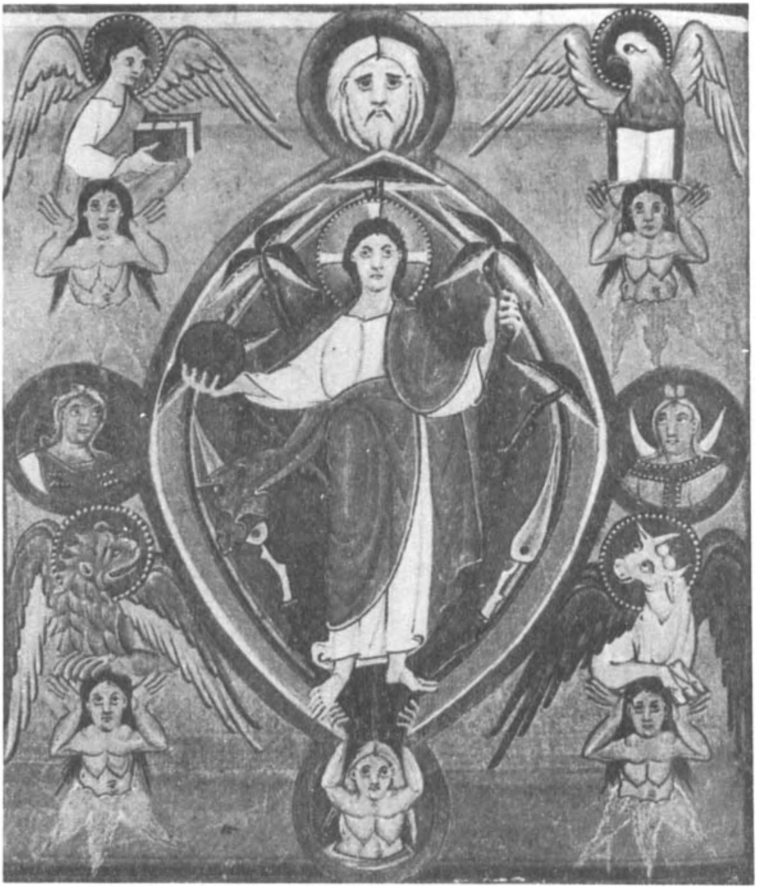


Plate 4. Reichenau Gospel Book, 11th century. Munich, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Clm. 4454, f. 20v.

incorporates the line 'Regnavit a ligno Deus' from the Old Latin text of Ps. 95.10.

The Tree of Life is depicted in the common Near Eastern tradition, symmetrically flanked by beasts and birds, on the eighth-century Lombardic relief in the cathedral at Cividale (Plate 5). The sacramental nature of its fruits is indicated, however, by the bunches of grapes on which the birds in its branches feed, and the waters of baptism issuing from the base of the paradisal Tree of Life are suggested not only by the four beasts of the Evangelists shown at the four corners of the design, but by the presence of the baptismal font below the stone canopy on which the relief is carved. Again, the liturgical context and function of the work of art is an integral part of its iconography. The Tree of Life is shown as the axis of the universe, continued into the upper register of the relief and there explicitly revealed as the cross, attended by two large candlesticks. It is also flanked by two small identical trees. They may serve to identify the cross with the Tree of Life not only in Eden but in the heavenly paradise, where it is rather ambiguously described in twofold aspect planted either side of the river of the water of life (Rev. 22.2). The tenth-century Byzantine, ivory Harbaville triptych also shows the cross in a paradisal setting and flanked by two small identical trees, with the additional significant detail that each tree is wreathed with grape-bearing vines on which birds feed.[13] The ivory thereby incorporates elements from both registers of the Cividale relief (the paradisal tree with birds eating its grapes and the cross flanked by two small trees) to suggest in a single image the cross as the Tree of Life in both the earthly and heavenly paradise.

Far more usually in the Middle Ages, the revelation of the identity of the cross as the Tree of Life was made in the context of the crucifixion itself by simply depicting the cross with stylized foliage. This represents an abbreviation of the fuller iconography of the tree and waters of life, incorporated in some of the earliest depictions of the crucifixion. Sixth-century pilgrims' ampullae from the Holy Land, bearing the legend 'Oil from the Tree of Life', had shown the cross as a stylized tree between the two thieves and the Virgin and St John. The tree/cross is on a mound from which the four paradisal rivers flow and is sometimes additionally accompanied by two small trees. Christ is not shown on the cross but in a portrait bust above it to suggest the identification of the Tree of Life with the glorified Lord. In some ampullae, his standing orant body actually replaces the

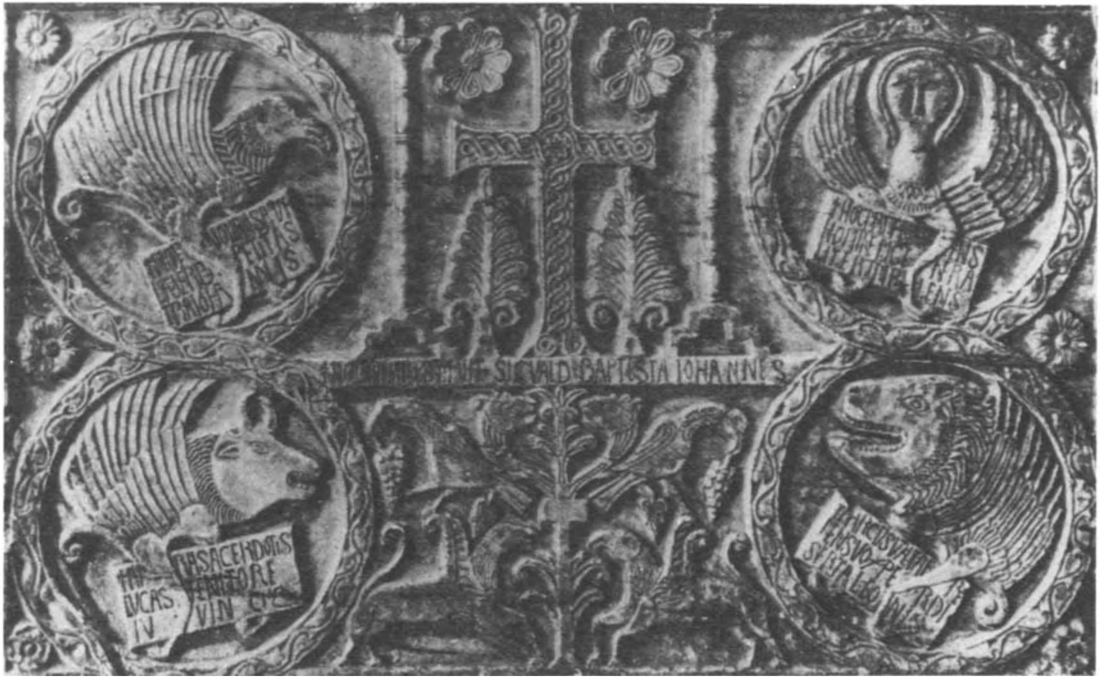

SIGVALD BAPTISTA IOHANNES
SACERDOTIS
LUCAS

Plate 5. Lombardic relief, 8th century. Cividale Cathedral baptistery.

vegetal cross in the crucifixion scene.[14] A constant feature of the different versions of this iconography is that the tree/cross is shown directly over a scene of the empty sepulchre, which is fashioned after the church of the Anastasis at the centre of the earth. In a masterly study, Paul Underwood showed the complex role of this architectural model in the iconography of the baptismal Fountain of Life, which developed separately from images of the Tree of Life, although many Eastern representations of the *fons vitae* retain the two small flanking trees associated with the *lignum vitae*.[15] Two Carolingian versions show an eight-columned font, surmounted by a canopy and a small gold cross. In the St Médard Gospels, four harts surround the font, which is supplied from a central fountain through four water spouts, thereby indicating the four rivers of paradise springing, like the four Gospels, from a single source. In the earlier version in the Godescalc Evangelistiary of c. 781–83, the liturgical lamps suspended from the *fons vitae* and the confronted beasts and birds who browse on the vegetation stemming from it, preserve clearer reminiscences of the Early Christian Tree of Life iconography.[16]

The separate development of the iconography of the *fons vitae* was to be largely continued in the later Middle Ages, as the Bedford Book of Hours lavishly demonstrates (Plate 1). The cross was still revealed as the cosmological, light-bearing tree with life-giving fruits but was combined with typological material rather than the four rivers of paradise, and set within the emotive devotional context of a crucifixion iconography which emphasized Christ's slumped dead body and the grieving figures of the Virgin and St John. The Society of Antiquaries' Psalter of Robert of Lindsey, Abbot of Peterborough, c. 1220, for example, shows the cross sprouting verdant foliage in bearing as its fruit the body of Christ (Plate 6). It spans heaven and earth, sun and moon are poised above its branches and it is set against the golden background of eternity. Formally, it divides contrasted scenes, marking the passing of the old dispensation (represented by roundels of Moses and the figure of Synagoga with the tablets of the Law on Christ's left) and the consummation of the new dispensation (shown in the roundels of St Peter and Ecclesia with a chalice on Christ's right).

The influential mid thirteenth-century treatise *Lignum vitae* by St Bonaventure systematically identifies Christ with the Tree of Life, of Eden, Golgotha and the New Jerusalem, but the traditional imagery is transformed by contemporary Franciscan spirituality. The fruits of

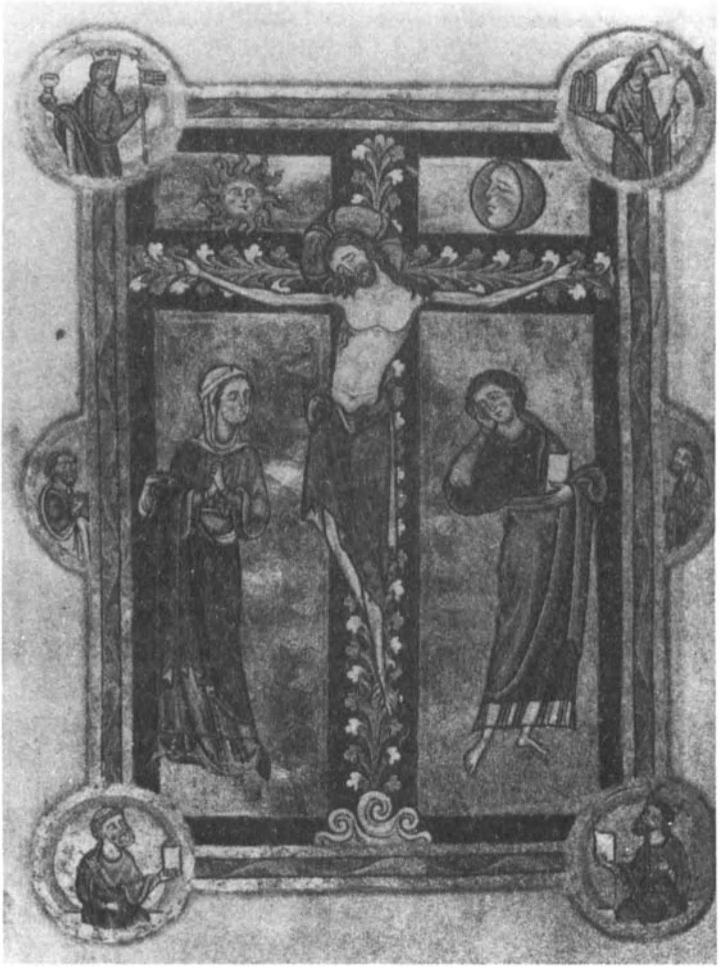


Plate 6. Psalter of Robert of Lindsey, c. 1220. London, Society of Antiquaries.

this tree are 'tasted' in the form of a series of affective meditations, particularly on the humanity and Passion of Christ, designed to stir the individual reader's love and compassion. The treatise was rendered into simplified diagrammatic form and frequently reproduced, often separated from its text.[17] The elaborate early fourteenth-century version by Pacino de Bonaguida in the Accademia in Florence shows Christ dead on the cross, which is seen as an enormous twelve-branched Tree of Life (Rev. 22.2) spanning not only all space but all time, from the earthly paradise depicted by the detailed scenes of the creation of Adam and Eve, the Fall and Expulsion at the base of the cosmic tree at the centre of the earth, to the heavenly paradise at its summit (Plate 7). The host-shaped fruit on each of its branches enclose pictorial meditations on scenes of Christ's life, Passion and glorification, shown in chronologically ascending order. The tree therefore chronicles man's long exile from paradise and the means of his return—by God's descent at the incarnation. In the scene of the Annunciation, the Christ-child is shown already bearing his cross. The fruit provides the soul with spiritual food, and the rung-like branches form a means of ascent, the way of the cross, for the individual's spiritual journey to paradise.

2. *The Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil*

The concept of the antithetical relationship of the Tree of Life and the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil, and of their inextricable connection within the divinely ordered plan of salvation, was familiar from exegesis, liturgy and the Holy Cross hymns.[18] These ideas were taken up in Western art rather late, however. Carolingian crucifixion iconography commonly indicates Christ's conquest of death by showing a serpent beneath his feet, actually coiled round the cross, sometimes combined with scenes of the resurrection of the dead. But full allusion to the Fall was only developed within crucifixion iconography during the tenth century.

The legend, repeated from the time of Julius Africanus, that the skull of Adam was buried at Golgotha was reflected in the Byzantine practice of depicting a skull at the foot of the cross. The tradition recorded in the *Book of the Cave of Treasures* describes the eventual burial of Adam's embalmed body at Golgotha, the place where the four quarters of the earth meet; the *Book of Adam and Eve* tells of the divine promise, 'I shall shed my blood upon thy head in the land

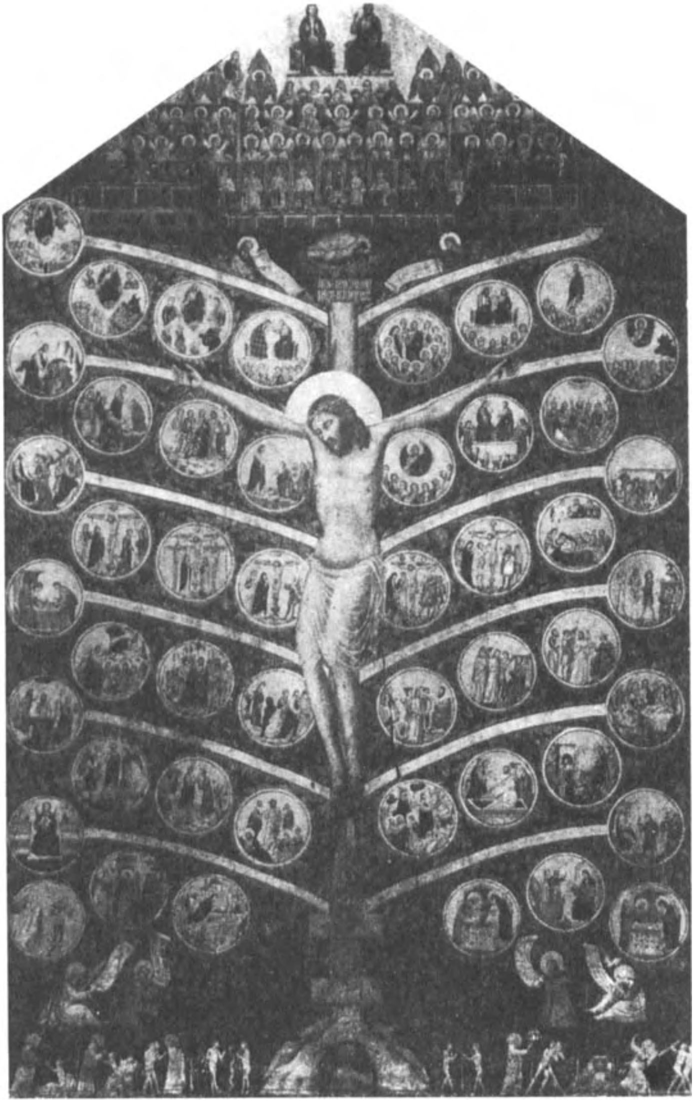


Plate 7. Pacino di Bonaguida, *Lignum vitae*, early 14th century. Florence, Accademia.

of Golgotha. For my blood shall be the water of life unto thee.'[19] In the Beatus Apocalypse of Gerona, c. 975, a conventionally shaped cross is revealed as the light-bearing Tree of Life: tufts of foliage are roughly etched on its lower shaft and it is attended by liturgical lamps beside the figures of sun and moon.[20] It rises from the closed and labelled tomb of the shrouded body of Adam (Plate 8). Christ's blood does not here flow directly onto Adam but into the eucharistic chalice on the shaft of the tree/cross. A late tenth-century embossed book cover from the Rhineland shows a scene of the Fall in miniature below the crucifixion. The cross is not depicted as a tree, but the serpent is coiled around its lower shaft which is flanked by Adam and Eve. Again, the chalice on the cross beneath Christ's feet indicates the eucharistic fruit of the Tree of Life. A variant in the late tenth-century Fulda sacramentary has the additional detail of showing Adam and Eve not only flanking the serpent-entwined lower shaft of the cross, but standing in their tombs.[21] At one level they may be read as being consigned to death at the Fall, but the presence of other figures below the cross rising from their tombs suggests the general resurrection to new life. Explicit typological pairing of the *lignum scientiae* and the cross is uncommon in early mediaeval art but does appear in the context of an elaborate exposition of the Fall and Redemption on the great bronze doors cast for the abbey church of St Michael at Hildesheim, c. 1015. Probably based on an Early Christian Genesis cycle via a Carolingian intermediary, the left-hand door recounts the events of Gen. 2.21–4.8, from the creation of Eve to the death of Abel, in eight panels in descending order.[22] The right-hand door shows the return to paradise by picturing, in ascending order, scenes of the Incarnation, Passion and Resurrection. Among the many correspondences made horizontally between the old and new creation on the two doors is the juxtaposition of the Fall and Crucifixion. Adam and Eve flank the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil, whose central position in the panel is mirrored by that of the cross in the adjacent scene. The cross is edged with stylized foliage to show it is the Tree of Life.

From the twelfth century there were many variations on these themes which were readily adapted to the changes in spirituality, sensibility and style evident in the later mediaeval iconography of the crucifixion. The fourteenth-century Psalter of Robert de Lisle, for example, depicts a crucifixion whose most memorable feature is the affective image of Christ's bleeding and twisted body hanging dead on

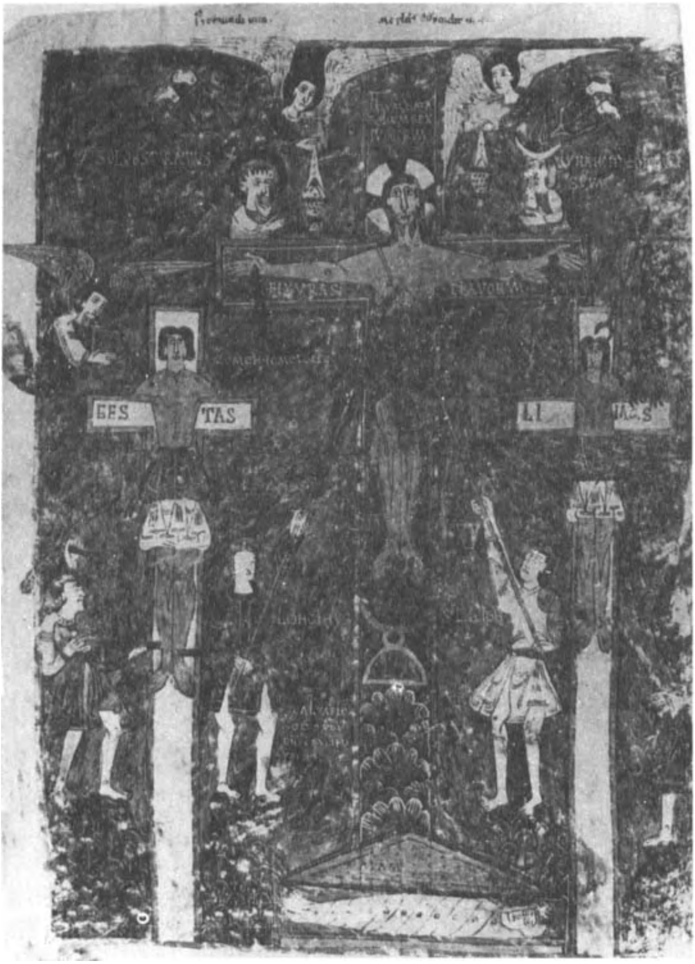


Plate 8. Beatus Apocalypse, c. 975. Gerona Cathedral, Ms 7, f. 16v.

the cross and mourned by the Virgin and St John, but the tiny clusters of foliage at the terminals of the cross also reveal that it is the Tree of Life (Plate 9).[23] It stems from the tomb of Adam who, in rising to receive the fruit of the redeeming tree in a chalice, suggests the continuing means of salvation offered mankind through the sacrament.

The Jewish apocryphal story of Seth journeying to paradise seeking the oil of mercy was, in its Latin form, assimilated to the earliest Christianized version of the story in the *Gospel of Nicodemus*.[24] Combined with the legends of the Holy Cross, this material became popular through the Golden Legend and in later mediaeval vernacular literature, and was pictorially narrated in selected episodes in a range of places and media: in the fresco cycles of Agnolo Gaddi in the choir of Santa Croce, Florence, c. 1380 and of Piero della Francesca at Arezzo, c. 1452–66; in Catherine of Cleves's Book of Hours c. 1440; and in various northern woodcut cycles. It is, however, difficult to discern the specific influence on later mediaeval crucifixion iconography of this composite legend. In exegesis, the cross was seen as being *mystically* prefigured by the Tree of Life in Eden. The composite legend told of its *material* construction from wood ultimately derived from the seeds or shoots taken from the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil and planted on Adam's grave by his son Seth. In the fourteenth century, the legend was combined with the motif of the dry, dead timbers of the cross bursting into leaf on bearing Christ at the crucifixion, thereby alluding to the apocryphal story that the *lignum scientiae* had withered when its fatal fruit was taken at the Fall.[25]

The representation of the cross as made of two roughly hewn timbers or tree-trunks, which was widely popular from the twelfth century, particular in English art, has been interpreted as directly derived from this apocryphal material.[26] However, the Holy Cross legends do not specify that the wood of the cross was roughly lopped and, moreover, the image of the lopped timber cross appears five times in late Anglo-Saxon art, already with considerable variety, and even earlier on the continent in the Carolingian ivory mounted on the cover of Henry II's Book of Pericopes.[27] All these examples pre-date the earliest extant combination, in the twelfth century, of the originally separate early legends of the vision of Seth and the History of the Holy Cross. The composite legend explains the startling paradox of death overcome by death at the crucifixion by showing with concrete and circumstantial detail that the tree of death (i.e. the Tree of the

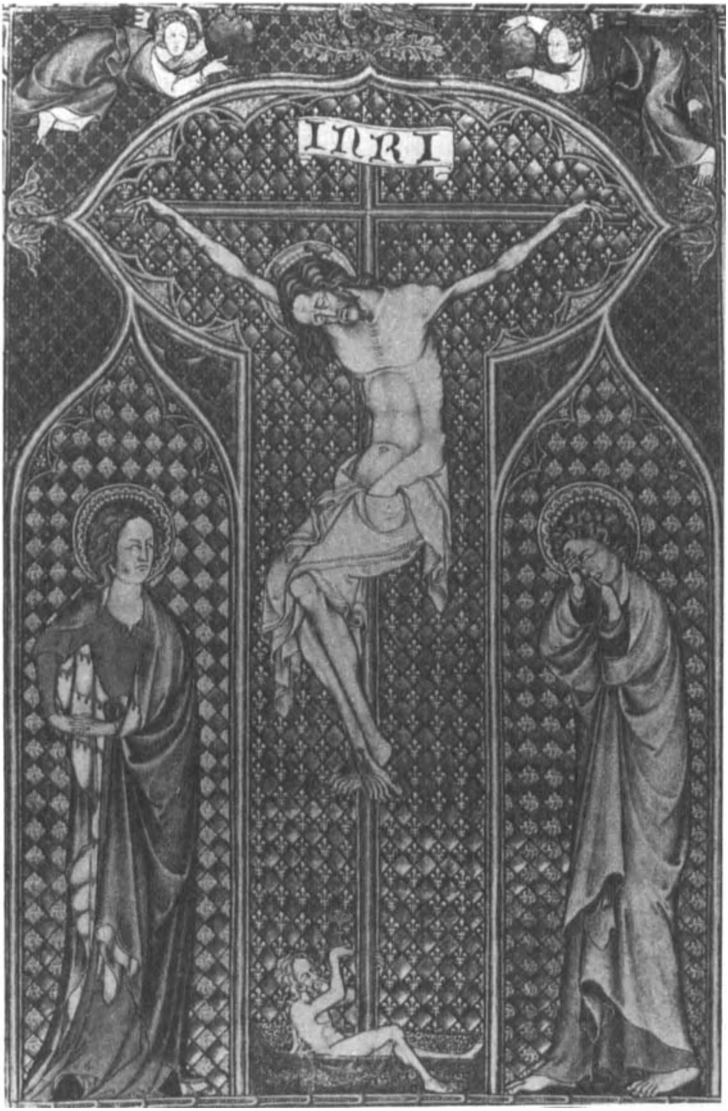


Plate 9. Psalter of Robert de Lisle, early 14th century. London, British Library, Arundel Ms 83 II, f. 132.

Knowledge of Good and Evil) literally became the very instrument of salvation. The iconography of the lopped timber cross instead gives symbolic expression to this profound theological mystery. Two mid thirteenth-century English psalters depict such a cross, starkly emphasizing the suffering and death of Christ hanging from its gaunt timbers. However, although stripped of foliage like a dead tree, the true identity of this roughly hewn, man-made gibbet is revealed through the rest of the iconography. The Evesham Psalter version shows that although the timbers seem dead, they are green, that the cross rises from the mound conventionally denoting the rock of Golgotha at the mid-point of the earth, that its hacked terminals penetrate the limits of the miniature's margins to show it is the cosmological tree (Plate 10). It is attended by angels and the sun and moon. In addition to showing such attributes of the Tree of Life and cosmic sovereignty, the variant in the Amesbury Psalter includes a tiny scene of the Father and Holy Spirit above Christ, revealing the crucifixion as the work of the Trinity, and the figure of Adam and other resurrected souls rising from their tombs below the tree, restored by its life-giving fruit. The sacramental nature of that fruit is shown in the figure of Ecclesia with a chalice, standing to Christ's right and superseding the old covenant of the Synagogue, shown to his left.[28]

3. *The Two Trees*

From the early twelfth century there was an astonishing proliferation of variations on the Tree of Life image, often incorporating other iconographic or thematic components, with frequent cross-fertilization between didactic and devotional modes. One feature of these later mediaeval developments was the recurring attempt to show not simply the polarity, or even the causative relationship between the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil and the cross, but to present the dry Tree of Death and the green Tree of Life within an integrated image which would have a direct application to the spiritual life of the individual soul. Particularly during the fifteenth century, such images also strongly asserted the role of the Church in the spiritual life. Three of the many strands in a complex process may be briefly indicated. First, the traditional typological relationship between Synagoga and Ecclesia, representing the old and new covenants and often depicted by personifications flanking the cross, became associated with the image of two trees bearing the contrasted fruits of the flesh and the

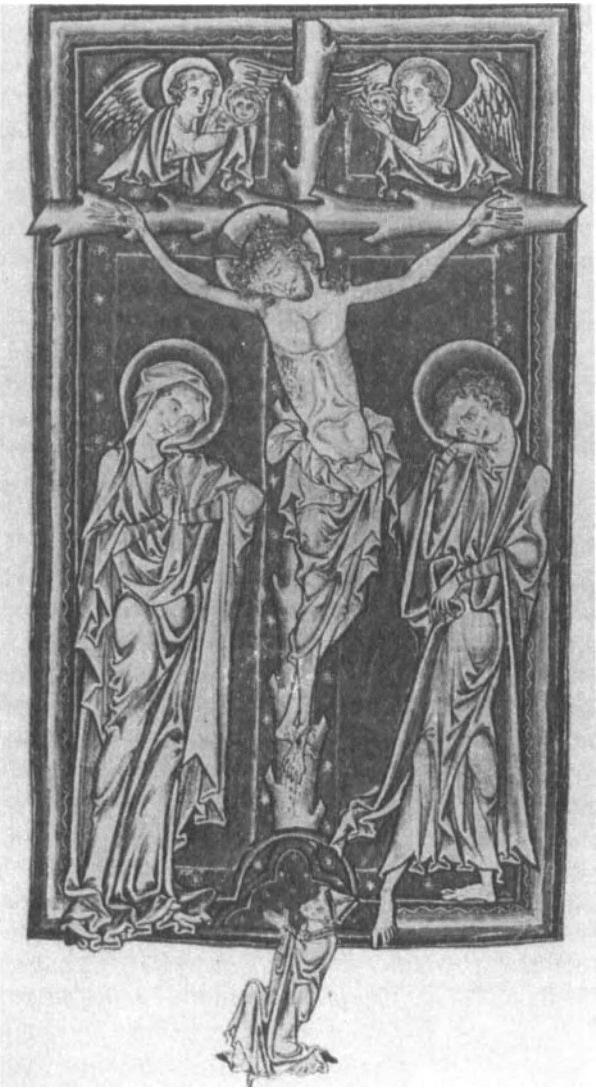


Plate 10. Evesham Psalter, c. 1250–60. London, British Library, Add. Ms 44874, f. 6.

spirit. Secondly, the image of the trees of the old and the new Adam, deceptively similar yet again with contrasted fruits, was often used as a mnemonic diagram on which to hang classifications of the Vices and Virtues so widely featured in later mediaeval teaching and penitential materials. Finally, elements of these two iconographic traditions were variously assimilated to two absorbing later mediaeval interests, the cult of Mary and the concern with the role of freewill and grace in the salvation process. In the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries, new and eventually irreconcilable images of contrasted trees were produced from either side of the Reformation divide, one showing the first and second Eve, the other the rule of Law and Grace.[29]

Two small identical trees accompany the crucifixion scene on the Alton Towers altarpiece, c. 1150, but, instead of immediately flanking it, as in the Eastern iconography of the Tree of Life, they are relegated to the side margins, to the position sometimes taken by figures of Ecclesia and Synagoga.[30] In the context of the exclusively typological scenes surrounding the crucifixion on this Mosan work, it is possible that the trees may have carried the connotations of Church and Synagogue for contemporaries. In a glass panel from St Germer-de-Fly, Beauvais, c. 1170–80, two such trees flanking the crucifixion are combined with contrasted figures of Ecclesia and Synagoga, Fides and Infidelitas.[31] Half a century or so earlier, the *Liber floridus* of St Omer, Ghent, c. 1120, had contrasted the fruit of two similarly shaped trees which are explicitly captioned *arbor bona–Ecclesia* and *arbor mala–Synagoga* (Plate 11).[32] They appear on the spectator's left and right respectively in a double-page image; the arrangement is that of Ecclesia and Synagoga in crucifixion iconography (i.e. to Christ's right and left). The burgeoning *arbor bona* bears twelve variegated fruits, alluding to the Tree of Life in Rev. 22.2 and labelled as the fruits of the Spirit listed in Gal. 5.22-24. The *arbor mala* is of identical shape but barren of leaves and with withered figs identified as the fruits of the flesh. The cursing of the unfruitful fig tree in Mt. 21.19 is recalled and the axes laid at the root of the *arbor mala* hint at other literary origins of the image: John the Baptist's sermon on repentance, warning of the fire and axe awaiting 'every tree which bringeth not forth good fruit' (Mt. 3.10), repeated in Mt. 7.16-20, 'Wherefore by their fruits you shall know them'. Certainly, the artist was familiar with the image of the hewn cosmic royal tree of Nebuchadnezzar's dream (Dan. 4.10-15) which is separately represented among the *Liber floridus*'s many tree and plant diagrams. Psalm 1 provides the

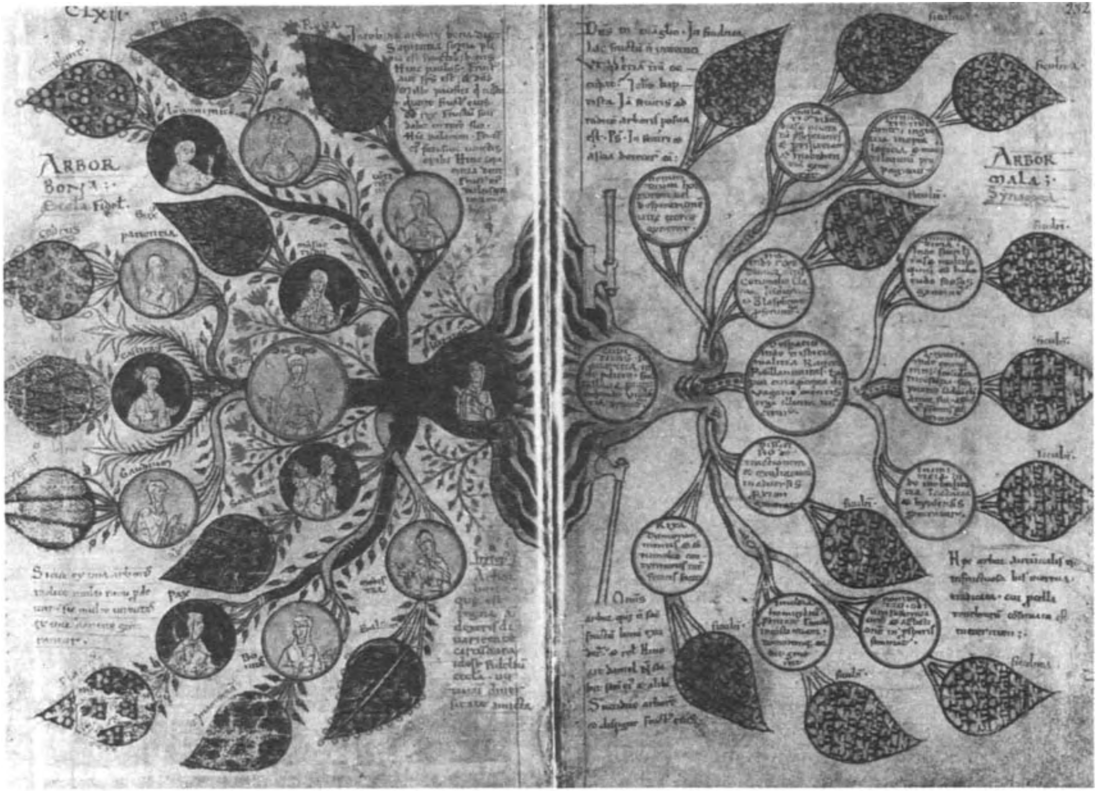

CLXII
ARBOR
BONA ;
Eccla fidel.
ARBOR
mala ;
Synagoga

Plate 11. *Liber floridus*, c. 1120. Ghent, Bibliotheck van de Rijksuniversiteit te Gent, Ms 92, ff. 231v-232r.

classic text for likening the good man to 'a tree planted by the rivers of water that bringeth forth his fruit in season; his leaf shall not wither'. In both Jewish and Christian exegesis this tree was interpreted as the paradisal Tree of Life.[33] The *arbor bona–Ecclesia* in the *Liber floridus* may be seen as both the spiritual life of the good man and the Tree of Life identified with the mystical body of Christ, his Church, in whom the fruits of the spirit are perfected.

The treatise *De fructibus carnis et spiritus*, once ascribed to Hugo of St Victor but now thought originally to have formed part of the *Speculum Virginum* attributed to the Benedictine Conrad of Hirsau, is illustrated with a diagram of two contrasted trees in a Leipzig manuscript of c. 1133;[34] it appears in a more developed form in a version at Salzburg (Plate 12) and in a copy of the *Speculum Virginum* of c. 1140.[35] The diagram probably had even earlier antecedents and rapidly became detached from the treatise to be repeatedly copied and modified throughout the later Middle Ages. The two trees are presented as mirror images, except that the branches of the Tree of Vices droop downwards. Rooted in Superbia, it bears the bitter *fructus carnis*, here identified as the seven deadly sins, and an image of the Vetus Adam lodges in the topmost bough. Across the page is a tree rooted in Humilitas and bearing the four cardinal and three theological virtues as its *fructus spiritus*. Surmounted by the figure of the Novus Adam, its fruits offer spiritual food and grow from seven branches, with three pairs arranged like rungs to provide a spiritual ascent through the graded hierarchy of the virtues. Some manuscripts show a serpent around the Tree of Vices emphasizing its allusion to the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil.[36] The version in the fourteenth-century Psalter of Robert de Lisle omits the Vetus Adam and shows the tree, labelled *via mortis*, flanked by Adam and Eve as if at the Fall (Plate 13). At the foot of the opposing Tree of Virtues is Mary at the Annunciation.[37]

The later mediaeval interest in pairing scenes of the Fall and Annunciation, and of contrasting Eve and Mary, was to be combined with the image of the contrasted fruit of two trees outside the context of the mnemonic diagrams of the contrasted fruits of the flesh and the spirit, Vices and Virtues, Synagoga and Ecclesia to which it is clearly indebted. Various elements of this eclectic iconography, particularly developed in southern Germany in the later fifteenth century, are anticipated in an illustration to *De laudibus sanctae crucis* from the Benedictine Regensberg house of St Emmeram, c. 1170–85.[38]

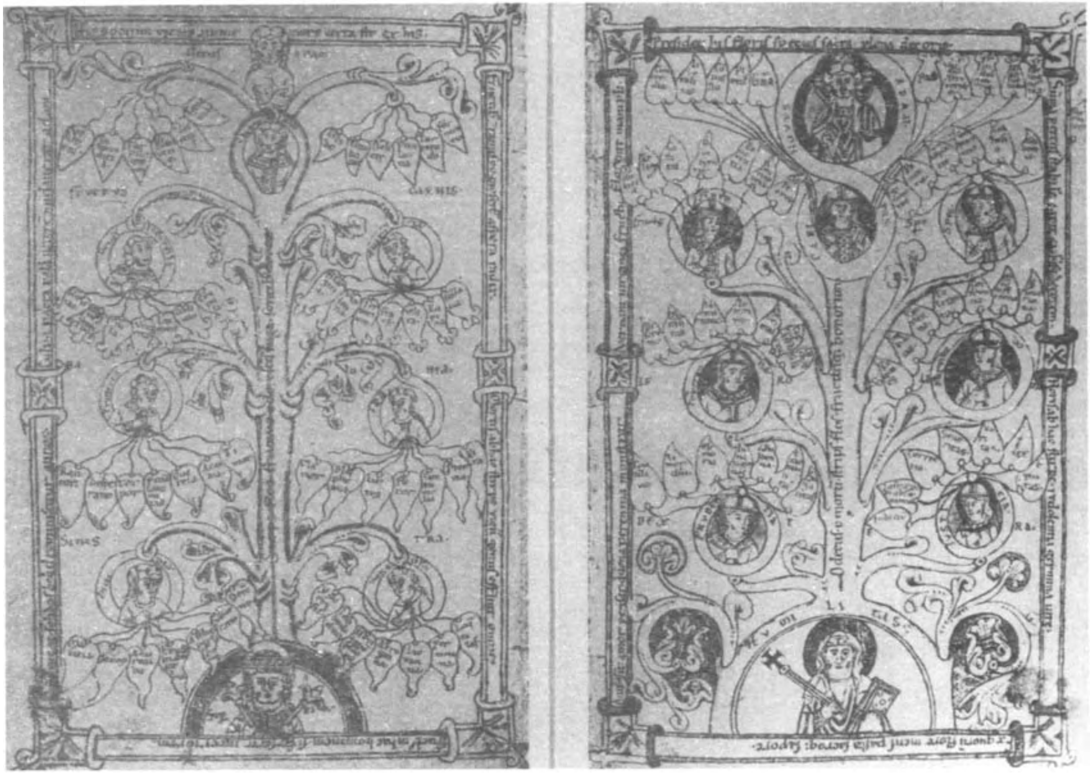


Plate 12. *De fructibus carnis et spiritus*, c. 1140. Salzburg, Universitatsbibliothek, Ms Sign. V.H. 162, ff. 75v-76r.

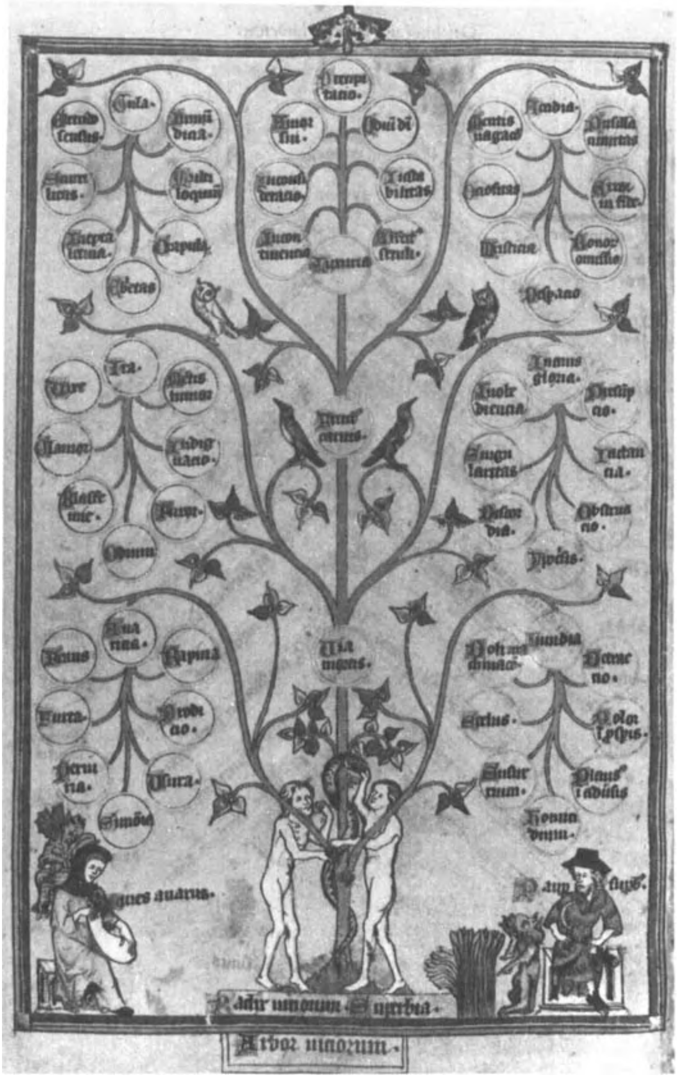

Gula.
Ira.
Usura.
Rapina
Radix uiciorum Superbia.
Arbor uiciorum.

Plate 13. Psalter of Robert de Lisle, Tree of Vices. London, British Library, Arundel Ms 83 II, f. 128v.

In the top register of the miniature the creator-logos confronts Adam and Eve hiding their shame; however, in the juxtaposed scene, he greets the new Eve, Mary, who is shown already overcoming the serpent with the standard of the cross, an iconography recalling the Annunciation (Plate 14). The central register shows Adam and Eve wearing their aprons (i.e. after the Fall). Eve still points to the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil, but Adam is in the act of turning from it towards the Tree of Life, here represented by a large cross sprouting tendrils of foliage and flanked by two small trees and held by the cruciform figure of Ecclesia. This is not a textual illustration of Genesis; rather, it shows the continuing temptation to eat of the tree of sin and death which prompts the old Adam in every man still, and the continuing invitation offered by the Church to taste the good fruits of the Tree of Life. The lower register makes explicit the sacramental nature of those fruits by depicting the sacrifice and death of Abel, a common type of the eucharist.

During the fifteenth century there were a number of experiments to crystallize such a theological programme around a unified image of the first and second Eve receiving contrasted fruits, sometimes from two separate, apparently identical little trees shown at the extremities of a crucifixion scene including figures of Ecclesia and Synagoga.[39] Sometimes the image omitted the crucifixion and showed a single central tree with divided trunk, or two intertwined stocks, with members of Ecclesia and Synagoga accompanying Mary and Eve respectively on either side.[40] Mary is shown on the spectator's left in all such images, reflecting the iconographic tradition of showing Ecclesia to Christ's right (and hence the spectator's left) in crucifixion iconography. The most ingenious pictorial solution, though not without some theological ambiguity, is the famous miniature by Berthold Furtmeyer in the missal produced for the Archbishop of Salzburg in 1481 (Plate 15).[41] Set within a rose-briar roundel and above scenes of the announcement of the Incarnation to the shepherds, the two Eves flanking a single central undivided tree are shown in pose and feature as mirror images of each other. From beneath a miniature crucifix in the leafy boughs of the tree Mary plucks a fruit. It is a host which, in her role as Ecclesia, she administers, priest-like, to the faithful souls kneeling beside her. In the branches on the other side of the tree is a death's head. Eve plucks her fruit from this side, but receives it directly from the jaws of the serpent coiled round the trunk of the tree. She dispenses it to those who attend her. The transformation of

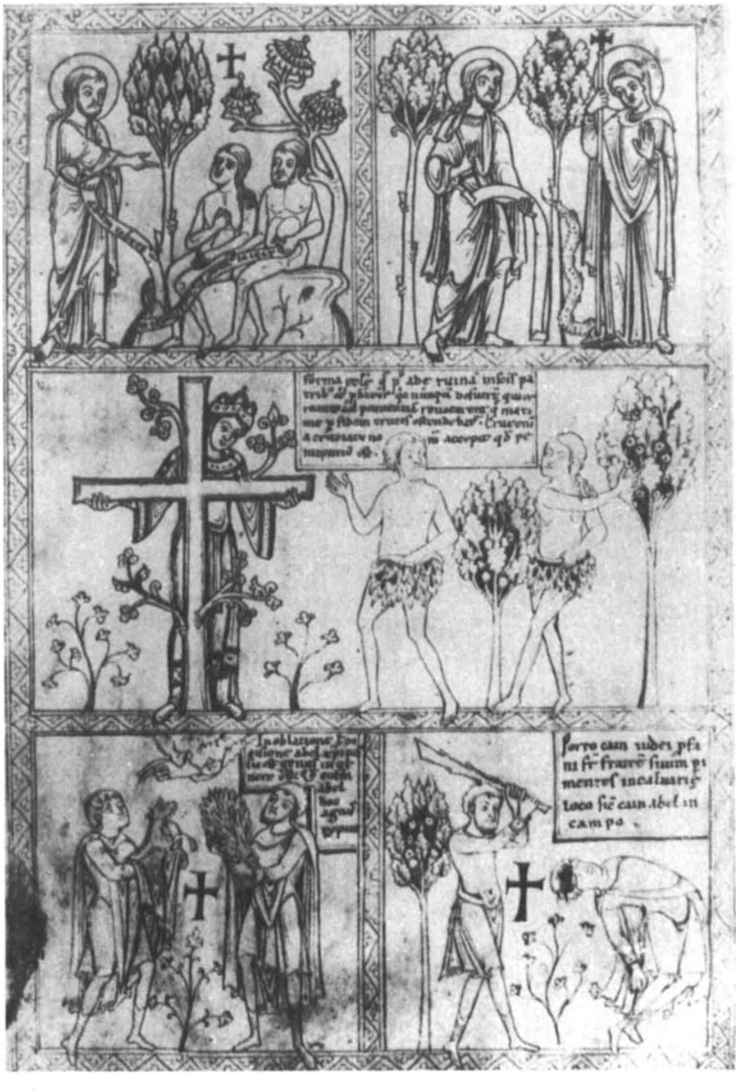


Plate 14. *De laudibus sanctae crucis*, c. 1170–85. Munich, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Cod. lat. 14159, f. 1r.

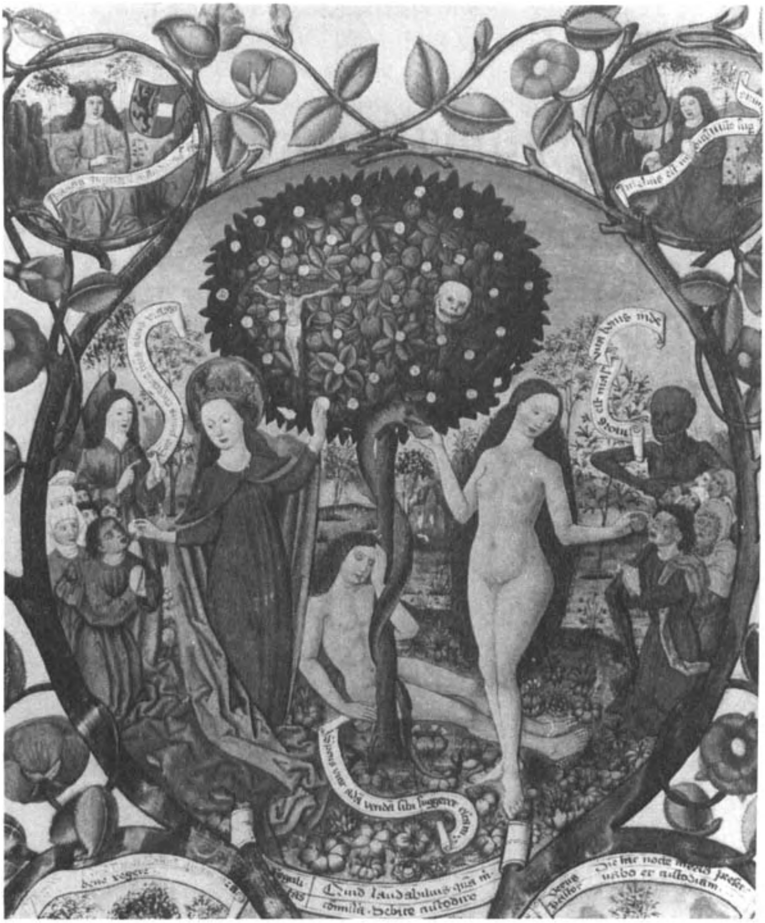
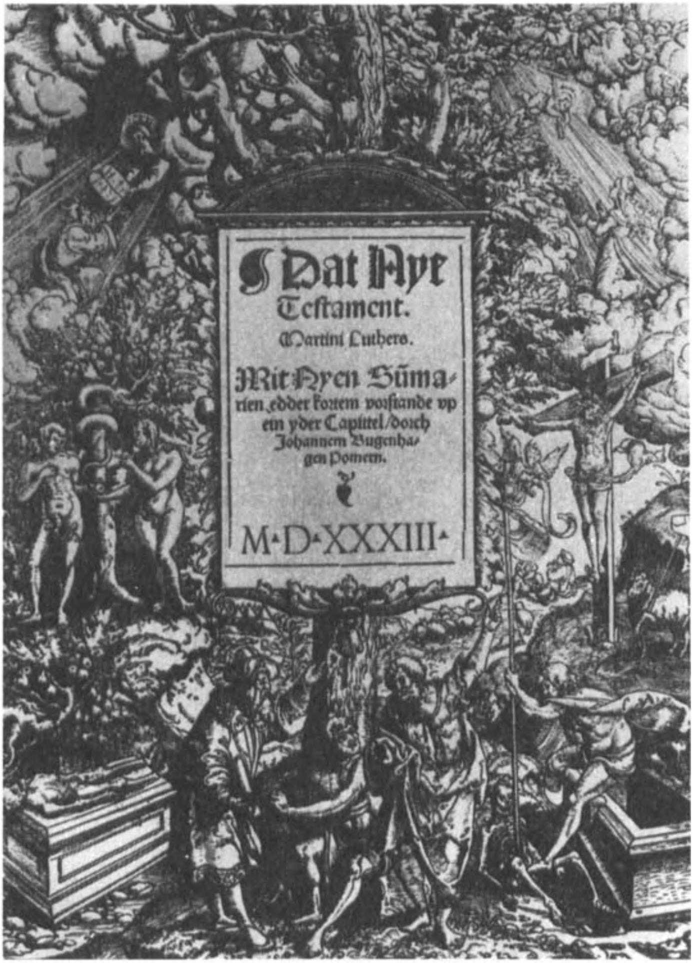


Plate 15. Berthold Furtmeyer, Missal for the Archbishop of Salzburg, c. 1481. Munich, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Clm. 15710, f. 60v.

the Garden of Eden scene to contrast two communions is explained by the context of the miniature which forms the missal's frontispiece for Corpus Christi. In the Gospel for the feast, Christ contrasts himself, the bread of life, with the manna which Moses gave the Israelites of old (Jn 6.31-35); exegesis of the passage contrasted the fatal food Eve devoured and the life-giving food Mary offers. Jerome's familiar tag of 'Death through Eve, life through Mary' is evoked in the figure of Death lurking to devour Eve's followers. Death's banderole is inscribed *Mors est malis, vita bonis*, while the angel behind Mary's followers holds a banner *Ecce panis angelorum factus cibus viatorum*, lines from Thomas Aquinas's sequence for Corpus Christi. The hymn is full of the imagery of the living bread, and the Epistle for the day is St Paul's account of the eucharist, with a warning against receiving it unworthily (1 Cor. 11.23-29). The related passage in 1 Cor. 5.5-8 also uses the image of the old leaven contrasted with Christ the new Passover and associates it with the theme of the destruction of the flesh and the salvation of the spirit. In Furtmeyer's miniature, Adam is slumped at the foot of the tree and bound to it by the coils of the serpent. Fruit like that plucked by Eve lies beneath his hand. But he is not dead. He is an Everyman figure, the old Adam, continually being invited to turn from his sin and receive instead the fruit of the Tree of Life, dispensed by the Church.

The image received increasingly elaborate mariological embellishments during the remaining years of the fifteenth century and in the early sixteenth, but within the same generation, members of Martin Luther's circle at Wittemberg modified it in a rather different way. In 1529 a particularly influential version appeared on a painted altarpiece from the Cranach workshops.[42] Variations of this composition circulated in Lutheran books and altar panels from the early 1520s. Altdorfer's woodcut for the title page of Luther's New Testament in Low German, prepared by Johann Bugenhagen and published at Lubeck in 1533, is a refined and literary version for a theologically informed audience (Plate 16).[43] Like the Cranach altarpiece it is an eclectic image, dominated by a central composite tree, leafy boughs on the spectator's right, barren branches on the left. In this, it follows the arrangement of the long tradition of the Trees of Vices and Virtues, rather than that of the *Liber floridus* and the iconography of Ecclesia and Synagoga. On either side of the central axis there are contrasted pairs of scenes in three registers. The re-alignment of familiar components and the omission of others marks a radical departure from the



Dat Nye
Teſtament.
Martini Luthers.
Mit Nyen Sūma-
rien, edder korten vorſtande vp
ein yder Capittel/dorch
Johannem Bugenha-
gen Pomern.

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Plate 16. Erhard Altdorfer, title page to Luther's New Testament, Lübeck, 1533. Nurnberg, Bibliothek des Germanischen National Museums, Inv. Nr. Bl. 308.

mediaeval tradition of contrasting Ecclesia and Synagoga, Life and Death, either side of the crucifixion in which the cross was sometimes explicitly revealed as the Tree of Life. It also differs from the image of the central composite tree with contrasted fruits as it had been formulated outside the context of crucifixion iconography in the late fifteenth century, although it patently deals with some of that period's theological preoccupations.

In Altdorfer's design, the customary contrast between the first and second Eve is omitted; the emphasis is instead on the first and second Adam in the closely paired scenes of the Fall and Crucifixion in the central register, and in the direct alignment of their respective tombs below. As in the 1529 Cranach altarpiece, there is no hint of Mary's role as Ecclesia; she is shown in her historical role at the Annunciation, heralding the age of Grace. The closely paralleled scene on the other side of the composite tree shows Moses receiving the Decalogue and thereby heralding the age of Law. God only partially emerges from the clouds beneath the dry tree on the left to give Moses the Law engraved on stone, but on the side of the green tree there is a rent in the heavens and the Christ-child streams earthwards at the Annunciation in a burst of light and glory, already bearing his cross. The contrast is between 'the ministration of death, written and engraven in stone' and the glorious 'ministration of the spirit' (2 Cor. 3.7-8). Immediately below Moses on the side of the old dispensation is the Fall and, below it, the tomb of Adam: 'For until the Law sin was in the world. . . death doth reign from Adam to Moses' (Rom. 5.14).

Adam's tomb and corpse are directly paralleled with the scene of Christ, the second Adam, rising from his tomb and trampling a skeleton underfoot. The studied allusion to themes in Romans 5–8 does not represent an exclusively Lutheran interest, of course, but arises from the late mediaeval concern with the problem of justification also reflected in the depiction of the Fall in a number of late fifteenth-century manuscripts of St Augustine's *City of God*. St Paul, standing by the fountain of life, symbol of grace, is shown quoting his own words from Rom. 5.12, 'By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men'. The *City of God* illustrations show either a skeleton at the foot of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil (as on Altdorfer's frontispiece to the Lutheran New Testament) or a cadaverous figure of Death entering the Garden to receive his own (as he does in Furtmeyer's illustration of the composite tree and two Eves in the Salzburg missal of

1481).[44] Like the Salzburg missal, Altdorfer's woodcut some fifty years later shows an ambiguous figure seated at the foot of the composite tree, suggesting Everyman faced with a choice. In the missal the emphasis is on turning from the fatal fruit of the first Eve to the life-giving bread offered by the second Eve as Ecclesia. In the Lutheran woodcut the choice is differently presented. Everyman's whole body is turned towards the side of the tree of sin and death, but his attention and gaze are being urgently re-directed by two counsellors. In this interior struggle between flesh and spirit (Rom. 7.14–8.14), he is guided by the Word of God, defined by Luther as 'the self-revealing action of God whereby the redeeming work of Christ is made known to man'. A.G. Dickens has pointed out that the 'Word of God' was, for Luther, threefold: 'the heard word of preaching; the visible word of the two gospel sacraments; the written word of the scriptures, seen and interpreted as a whole'.[45] Biblical history is shown in Altdorfer's frontispiece as the unfolding of the divine plan. It ranges from the Fall to Moses, the Law and the brazen serpent prefiguring the redeeming cross in the old covenant scenes on the left, to the scenes of the Incarnation, Crucifixion and Resurrection on the right. At the foot of the composite tree, which bears the title to the New Testament, an Old Testament prophet holds the other part of 'the written word of the scriptures' and joins the last of the prophets, John the Baptist (suggesting 'the heard word of preaching'), in directing Everyman's gaze to 'the redeeming work of Christ' presented on the right.

The Baptist again points the way to Christ, and to the *Agnus Dei* beneath the crucifixion, its standard allusion to the eucharist serving in this Lutheran context as one image of 'the visible word of the two gospel sacraments'. The other sacrament, of baptism, is implicit in the scene below the crucifixion where a skeleton is in the act of lying down beside the tomb of Christ, who rises from the grave, piercing the skeleton with the standard of the cross. Everyman is thus being urged to repent, to be crucified with Christ and to die to the old Adam that the body of sin might be destroyed:

> Know you not as many of us were baptised into Jesus Christ were baptised into his death: Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death that, like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life (Rom. 6.3-4).

Directed by the threefold Word of God, Everyman (and therefore the spectator) is exhorted to turn, by faith, from the sin and death which reign under the Law, to the conquest of sin and death under Grace: 'as by the offence of one, judgment came upon all men to condemnation, even so by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life' (Rom. 5.18). This turning from the tableau presented on the left of the frontispiece to that on the right aptly illustrates Luther's early description of the life of man as a transition 'from law to grace; from sin to righteousness; from Moses to Christ'. In his commentary *In primum librum Mose enarrationes*, Luther asserted, 'Arbor mortis est lex, arbor vitae est evangelium seu Christus'. As early as 1516 he had set two of his students the exercise of defending the proposition 'Man without grace is a tree that can bring forth no good fruit'. In Altdorfer's image the Fall is interpreted through the eyes of St Paul, as understood at one time by St Augustine, in turn as seen by Luther's circle in the light of late mediaeval theological preoccupations.

Cruder variants revealed the polarization of Luther's teaching on the opposition of the flesh and the spirit, the Law and Grace, in terms of his own opposition to Rome. The 'Word of God' was to be set out on Cranach's altarpiece of 1545 in scenes of contemporary Lutheran preaching and the two sacraments illustrating the reign of Grace, contrasted with savagely propagandist scenes vilifying the Roman Church and the rule of Law.[46] In such a programme the Tree of Life had no organic function and simply disappeared, its purely formal role of dividing the picture area and separating contrasted scenes being readily replaced by a central column of masonry. Already in Altdorfer's sophisticated image of 1533, the central composite tree bearing the great scriptural title-board and accompanied by a subsidiary scene of the crucifixion, departs from the long iconographic tradition of the cosmological Tree of Life, simultaneously evoking Eden, Golgotha and the heavenly paradise, and always to be identified with the sacramental and mystical body of Christ. The radical implications of the composition are obscured by the sheer familiarity of some of its constituent themes and images: the dry tree of the old Adam, the green tree of the new; the Tree of Vices and Tree of Virtues; the fruits of the flesh and spirit; the typological contrast of the old and new covenants; the image of Adam restored to life at the foot of the cross. Moreover, the device of a central tree simultaneously recalling the Fall and the Crucifixion, the Tree of Knowledge and the Tree of Life, continues a long mediaeval tradition of trying to convey through a single image not only the antithetical nature of the *lignum scientiae* and the *lignum crucis*, but their interrelatedness within the divine plan of human salvation and their continuing relevance to the individual spiritual life.

Notes

1. B.L., Cod. Cotton Otho B. vi; K. Weitzmann, 'Observations on the Cotton Genesis Fragments', in K. Weitzmann (ed.), *Late Classical and Medieval Studies in Honour of A.M. Friedman* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1955), pp. 112-31.

2. The Moutier–Grandval Bible (London, B.L., Cod Add. Ms. 10546, f. 5v); the Bamburg Bible (Bamburg, Staatsbibl. Misc. class. Bibl. 1, f. 7v); the Vivian Bible, also known as the First Bible of Charles the Bald (Paris, B.N., Cod. lat. 1, f. 10v); the Bible of San Paolo (Rome, San Paolo fuori le mura, f. 8v), illustrated in H. Kessler, *The Illustrated Bibles from Tours* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1977), pls. 1-4. Their relationship with the early Christian Genesis cycle is discussed pp. 8-35, pls. 5-37.

3. Kessler, *Illustrated Bibles*, pp. 28-32.

4. K. Weitzmann, 'The Genesis Mosaics of San Marco and the Cotton Genesis Miniatures', in O. Demus (ed.), *The Mosaic of San Marco, Venice*, II (4 vols.; Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1984), pp. 105-43 and nn. 253-37, pls. 107-30.

5. M.R. James (ed.), *The Apocryphal New Testament* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1924), pp. 126-28.

6. E.A. Wallis Budge (trans.), *The Book of the Cave of Treasures* (London: Religious Tract Society, 1927), p. 64.

7. G. Widengren, *Mesopotamian Elements in Manichaeism* (1946), p. 157, and *The King and the Tree of Life in Ancient Near Eastern Religion*, parts 2 and 4 of *Studies in Manichaean, Mandaean and Syrian Gnostic Religion* (Uppsala: Uppsala Universitets ärsskrift); E.O. James, *The Tree of Life* (Leiden: Brill, 1966); E.A.S. Butterworth, *The Tree at the Navel of the Earth* (Berlin: de Gruyter, 1970).

8. *Cave of Treasures*, p. 63. For surveys and references to the large primary literature, see E. Greenhill, 'The Child in the Tree: A Study of the Cosmological Tree in Christian Traditrion', *Traditio* 10 (1954), pp. 327-71, and G. Ladner, 'Vegetation Symbolism and the Concept of Renaissance', in M. Meiss (ed.), *De artibus opuscula XL: Essays in Honour of Erwin Panofsky* (New York: New York University Press, 1961), pp. 302-22. Also, D.W. Robertson, 'The Doctrine of Charity in Medieval Literary Gardens', *Speculum* 26 (1951), pp. 24-49.

9. Z. Ameisenowa, 'The Tree of Life in Jewish Iconography', *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* (1938–39), pp. 330, 334.

10. D. Meeham (ed.), *Adamnan's De Locis Sanctis* (Dublin: Dublin Institute for Advanced Studies, 1958), p. 56.

11. For discussion of the mosaics inscription see G. Ladner, 'Medieval and Modern Understanding of Symbolism: A Comparison', *Speculum* 54 (1979), p. 237 n. 76. For the detail of the serpent at the foot of the Tree of Life, see R.T.

Ettinghausen, 'The Snake-Eating Stag', in Weitzmann, *Medieval Studies*, p. 272.

12. D. Gaborit-Chopin, 'Sedis di San Marco', in *The Treasury of Venice*, Catalogue of British Museum Exhibition (Milan: Olivetti, 1984), cat. 7, pp. 98-105.

13. Paris, Louvre; G. Schiller, *Ikonographie der Christlichen Kunst*, III (Gütersloh: Gerd Mohn, 1966), pl. 550; Cividale relief, pl. 552.

14. A. Grabar, *Les Ampoules de Terre Sainte* (Paris, 1958), pls. 14, 16, 18, 22, 24, 39.

15. P. Underwood, 'The Fountain of Life in Manuscripts of the Gospels', *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 5 (1950), pp. 43-138, at 99-106.

16. Underwood, 'Fountain of Life', pp. 73-74, pls. 25, 26.

17. S. Bonaventura, *Opera Omnia*, VIII (Quaracchi: Collegium S. Bonaventurae, 1898), pp. 68ff. For later versions of the *Lignum vitae* diagram, see F. Saxl, 'A Spiritual Encyclopaedia of the Later Middle Ages', *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 5 (1942), pp. 109, 111-113, pls. 27b, 28.

18. Ladner, 'Vegetative Symbolism and the Concept of Renaissance', p. 312. J. Szoverffy, '*Crux Fidelis*: Prolegomena to a History of the Holy Cross Hymns', *Traditio* 22 (1966), pp. 1-41.

19. *Cave of Treasures*, pp. 126, 224; S.C. Malan (trans.), *The Book of Adam and Eve* (London: Williams & Norgate, 1882), p. 45. For legendary materials about the Garden of Eden, see G. Every, *Christian Mythology* (London: Hamlyn, 1970), pp. 50-63.

20. Gerona Cathedral, ms 7, f. 16v; J. Williams, *Early Spanish Manuscript Ilumination* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1977), p. 97, pl. 29. The miniature also uses the Eastern apocryphal tradition of naming the two thieves at the crucifixion.

21. Säckingen, Stiftskirche St Fridolin; Göttingen, Univ. Bib. Cod. theol. 231, f. 60v: Schiller, *Ikonographie*, II, pls. 370, 381.

22. Kessler, *Illustrated Bibles*, p. 27, pl. 5.

23. B.L., Arundel 83 II, f. 132; L. Freeman Sandler, *The Psalter of Robert de Lisle* (London: Harvey Miller/Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1983), pl. 17.

24. James, *Apocryphal New Testament*, pp. 126-28; E. Quinn, *The Quest of Seth for the Oil of Life* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1962), pp. 88-101.

25. M.R. Bennett, 'The Green Tree and the Dry Tree', *Archaeological Journal* 83 (1926), pp. 21-32; Ladner, 'Medieval and Modern', pp. 309-11; R.E. Kaske, 'A Poem of the Cross in the Exeter Book: Riddle 60', and 'The Husband's Message', *Traditio* 23 (1967), pp. 41-71 and 65-66; Greenhill, 'Child in the Tree', pp. 354-57.

26. W.L. Hildburgh, 'A Medieval Bronze Pectoral Cross', *Art Bulletin* 14 (1932), pp. 79-102 and 90-97.

27. J. O'Reilly, 'The Rough-hewn Cross in Anglo Saxon Art', in M. Ryan (ed.), *Ireland and Insular Art 500–1200* (Dublin: Royal Irish Academy, 1987), pp. 153-58.

28. B.L., Add. Ms 44874, f. 6 and Oxford, All Souls Coll. Ms 6, f. 5, reproduced in D.H. Turner, *Early Gothic Illuminated Manuscripts* (London: British Museum, 1965), pls. 1, 10.

29. Some of these developments are discussed in more detail in J. O'Reilly,

Studies in the Iconography of the Virtues and Vices (New York: Garland, 1988), pp. 323-434.

30. J. Beckwith, *Early Medieval Art* (London: Thames & Hudson, 1964), pl. 168. As early as c. 1000–25, the Uta Codex from St Emmeram, Regensberg, had shown Ecclesia and Synagoga so positioned in the margins to Christ's right and left, with personifications of Vita and Mors immediately flanking him (Beckwith, *Early Medieval Art,* pl. 97).

31. L. Grodecki, 'Les Vitraux de XIIe siècle de S Germer-de-Fly', in P. Bloch and J. Hoster (eds.), *Miscellanea Pro Arte: Hermann Schnitzler zur Vollendung des 60. Leben-jahres* (Düsseldorf: Schriften des Pro Arte Medii Aevi no. 1, 1965), pp. 149-57. For a further example of the association of trees and Ecclesia and Synagoga, see H. Tourbet, 'Une fresque de San Pedro de Sorpe (Catalogne) et le thème iconographique de l'arbor bona-ecclesia, arbor mala-synagoga', *Cahiers Archéologiques* 19 (1969), pp. 167-89, fig. 2.

32. Ghent, Bibl. de L'Université et de La Ville, Ms 16, ff. 231v-232; facsimile ed. E.A. Derolez (Ghent, 1973); A. Katzenellenbogen, *Allegories of the Virtues and Vices in Medieval Art* (London, 1939; repr. New York: Norton, 1964), pp. 63-67, pls. 64-65. L. Behling, 'Ecclesia als Arbor Bona', *Zeitschrift für Kunstwissen-Schaft* 13 (1959), pp. 139-54.

33. M. Smith, 'The Image of God—Notes on the Hellenization of Judaism', *BJRL* 40 (1958), p. 506; K.A. Wirth, 'Notes on Some Didactic Illustrations in the Margins of a Twelfth Century Psalter', *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 33 (1970), p. 26. Christ is seen as the *lignum quod plantum est* in the commentaries of Jerome, Ambrose, Hilary, Augustine and Cassiodorus. One of the earliest Western illustrations of Ps. 1.3 shows Christ on the cross: the Stüttgart psalter c. 820, Stüttgart, Wurttembergische Landesbibl., Biblia folia 23, f. 2r; facsimile ed. E.T. de Wald, *The Stüttgart Psalter* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1930), p. 7.

34. Leipzig UB 148, ff. 113v-114r; E.S. Greenhill, 'Die Stellung der Handschrift British Museum Arundel 44 in der Überlieferung des *Speculum Virginem*' (Munich: Grabmann-Instituts, 1966), pls. 13-14. R. Bultot, 'L'auteur et la fonction litteraire du *De fructibus carnis et spiritus*', *Récherches de théologie ancienne et medievale* 30 (1963), pp. 148-54. The treatise is published among the works of Hugo of St Victor in J.-P. Migne (ed.), *Patrologia Latina* (Paris: Garnier Fratres, 1880).

35. Saltzburg Studienbibl. ms. Sign. V,1.H 162, ff. 75v-76r, reproduced in Katzenellenbogen, *Allegories*, pls. 66-67. A. Watson ('The Speculum Virginum', *Speculum* 3 [1928], pp. 445-69) discusses B.L., Arundel 44 where the Trees of Vices and Virtues on ff. 28v-29 appear in the context of related images of the Tree of Jesse, the Tower of Wisdom and the Seven Gifts of the Holy Spirit, the *scala paradisi*. For the perpetuation and elaboration of these tree diagrams, see Saxl, 'Spiritual Encyclopedia', pp. 107-117.

36. Cologne, historisches Archiv., ms W. Fol. 276, ff. 11v-12r, reproduced in M.W. Evans, *Medieval Drawings* (London: Hamlyn, 1969), pls. 72-73. Late fifteenth-century editions of Boccaccio's *De claris mulieribus* depict the Fall, with

exemplifications at the seven deadly sins in the branches of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil; illustrated in S.C. Chew, *The Pilgrimage of Life* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1962), fig. 1.

37. B.L., Arundel ms 83 II, ff. 128v-129r. The Trees of Vices and Virtues are here included among the diagrams of the late thirteenth-century Franciscan collection *Speculum Theologie*, which also shows the related diagram of the Bonaventuran *Lignum Vitae*. The Psalter depicts the crucifixion on the Tree of Life growing from the grave of Adam. See Freeman Sandler, *Psalter*, pp. 23-25, pls. 8-9, 14, 17.

38. Munich, Bayer, Staatsbibl. Cod. lat. 14159, f. 1r; E. Guldan, *Eva und Maria, eine Antithese als Bildmotiv* (Graz-Köhn: Hermann Böhlhaus, 1966), pp. 90-91, 178, pl. 38. The text and inscriptions on the miniature already refer to the mystery of the cross *ante legem. sub lege, usque ad graciam* and associate the theme with the Church and the Jews; these ideas were to be greatly elaborated in the subsequent iconography of the contrasted fruit of the two trees.

39. Austrian woodcut, c. 1460/70; Guldan, *Eva und Maria*, pp. 138, 220, pl. 154; illuminated initial in a Gradual produced for Katherine Adelmann, the reforming abbess of the Karissenkloster, Munich, c. 1494–97, in *Bayers Kirche Mittelalter handschriften und urkunden* (Catalogue, Munich, 1960), cat. 78, pl. 161.

40. Frescoes of Giovanni de modena in the chapel of St Georgio, Bologna, S. Petronio; Bible of Johannes von Zittau, Breslau Staatsbibl. Cod. M 1006, f. 3v in Guldan, *Eva und Maria*, pls. 152-53, 156. The Bible Moralisée of c. 1240 had contrasted Eve receiving the fruit from the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil with Mary receiving the Christ-child from on high at the Annunciation; this theme crystallized around a central undivided tree with Eve and the New Eve either side, in the Book of Hours of Catherine of Cleves, c. 1440, Guldan, *Eva und Maria*, pls. 30, 157.

41. Munich, Bayer, Staatsbibl. Cod. lat. 15710, f. 5-60v; Guldan, *Eva und Maria*, frontispiece.

42. Gotha, Landesmuseum, M. Friedländer and J. Rosenberg, *Die Gemälde von Lucas Cranach* (Berlin, 1932), p. 64, pl. 183; Schiller, *Ikonographie*, II, pls. 533-34.

43. Nurnberg, Germ. Nat. Mus., Inv. Nr. Bl. 308, Schiller, *Ikonographie*, II, pl. 538.

44. An example of each type in Chew, *Pilgrimage*, figs. 6, 7.

45. A.G. Dickens, *Reformation and Society in Sixteenth Century Europe* (London: Thames & Hudson, 1966), p. 58.

46. *Der Unterschied zwischen de Evangelischen und Katholischen Gottendienst* (Kupferstichkabinett, Berlin), reproduced in Dickens, *Reformation*, pl. 23.

GARDENS OF LOVE AND THE GARDEN OF THE FALL

Helen Phillips

Mediaeval writers inherited the garden from biblical and exegetical tradition as an image of transformation. The Genesis Garden of earthly pleasure had become the Garden of the Fall, but that fallen state which all inherit could be transformed through the second Adam into eternal paradise. Literary gardens undergo transformation far more easily, and I would like to look at how this potentiality for multiple meaning was used by several mediaeval English and French writers.

The study of gardens in mediaeval art and literature is a vast subject, part of the even wider subject of man's (and God's) relationship to the natural world, and attitudes to order, pleasure and time. The best guides to this domain in mediaeval literature are Derek Pearsall and Elizabeth Salter's *Landscapes and Seasons of the Medieval World* and Rosamund Tuve's *Seasons and Months: Studies in a Tradition of Middle English Poetry*.[1]

The Genesis story, together with the Church's reading of it, is only one source for the association of gardens with idealized pleasure and love. There are other reasons, secular and religious. Gardens are the cultivation of natural abundance for pleasure. Their ordering of nature is a ready symbol, on the secular level, for courtly refinement, and, on a theological level, for the divine order behind the world of change. We should also remember that socially, for a noble household, a garden functioned as an extra room, one which offered both pleasure and privacy. In mediaeval physiology, and in mediaeval poetry—perhaps more than in any other—the return of spring was associated with the approach of love:

> Lenten [spring] is come with love to town[2]

and in a multitude of lyrics and romances it is a spring morning in a garden which is the setting for the beloved—

> En un trop bel vergier
> La vi, cele matinée. . . [3]
>
> [in a very beautiful garden I saw her, this morning. . .]

—or for the composition of a love-poem:

> En mai fut faite, un matinet,
> En un vergier flori, verdet,
> Au point de jor,
> Ou chantoient cil oiselet. . . [4]
>
> [in May it was made, one morning, in a flowery, verdant garden, at break of day when the birds were singing. . .]

Persian pleasure gardens, in life and art, influenced the European association of enclosed gardens with love (*paradise* comes from the Persian *pairi-daēza*, 'enclosed park').[5] Mediaeval poets also inherited the theme of the *locus amoenus*, the description of an ideally pleasant landscape, from Late Classical literature (Claudian is the most influential source[6]) and from the rhetorical tradition.[7]

Secular poets often compare gardens—or a lady's face, or a smile, or a night of love—to paradise without necessarily inviting theological second thoughts, and many writers draw on imagery of the Fall without completely undermining the secular nature of their enterprise. Gower (d. 1408) says his mistress has many beautiful flowers in her *parclose*, but he cannot enter: the gate is shut against him.[8] When Yseut in the thirteenth-century *Prose Tristan*[9] says her loss of Tristan exceeds Adam's loss of Eden, the reference, like the fact that her lament is set in an archetypal garden of love, serves to emphasize rather than to condemn the uncompromisingly secular polarities of her personal universe: her *lai mortel* is both a paean of praise to love and a declaration that in the face of its loss nothing else is of any account; death and love are one, for suicide takes her to Tristan 'whether in hell or paradise'. Here sacred references serve a flagrant romanticism. A thirteenth-century rondeau has the refrain

> Est-il paradis, amie
> Est-il paradis qu'amer?
>
> [Is there paradise, my love, is there paradise but loving?]

It is a refrain expecting the answer *no*, and gets it:

Nenil voir, ma douce amie . . .
Cil qui dort és bras s'amie
A bien paradis trové. . . [10]

[No indeed, my sweet love. . . he who sleeps in the arms of his beloved has certainly found paradise].

Sometimes, however, in secular works, echoes of Eden bring radical questions or doubts to the reader. Chrétien de Troyes' romance *Cligés* (c. 1190) is often seen as an anti-*Tristan*, proposing the virtues of Christian marriage against the idolization of passion found in the Tristan romances. Yet its clandestinely married lovers build a secret garden for love. Their bed is under a grafted tree in the midst of the garden. When an intruder breaks in and hides in the tree it is the fall of a pear which alerts them to the danger.[11] The ambiguities of the scene may reflect on their preoccupation with sensuality,[12] or with private pleasure.[13] The courtly setting, reminiscent of a famous scene in Tristan romances where Mark in a tree spies the lovers chastely asleep with a sword between them, is undermined by reminders both of the biblical Fall and the lewd folk-tradition meanings of pears and grafting.[14] This alliance of the theological and the lewd against the courtly idealization of carnal pleasure may surprise modern readers, but was a common strategy we shall meet again.

In religious poetry, Mary as Queen of Heaven is often depicted in a garden. This is not simply a holy parody of a courtly image: there are sound theological reasons. It belongs to the tradition of 'affective piety', an image of earthly love used for the perfect beloved. It is also an expression of the typological interpretation of the Song of Songs (4.12); Mary as virgin mother is *hortus conclusus*, 'a garden enclosed', and there are ancillary images like the Rose of Sharon, Lily of the Valley (2.1), and the fountain sealed (4.12). The Madonna of the Rose Garden is a common theme in mediaeval art,[15] and since Mary reverses Eve's action ('death by Eve, life by Mary'[16]), she can be presented as an earthly garden transformed, Eden restored:

Douce dame emperïaus,
Esmaree flors de lis,
Douz vergiers especïauz
Ou li sains fruis fu cuillis,
Soverains rosiers eslis,

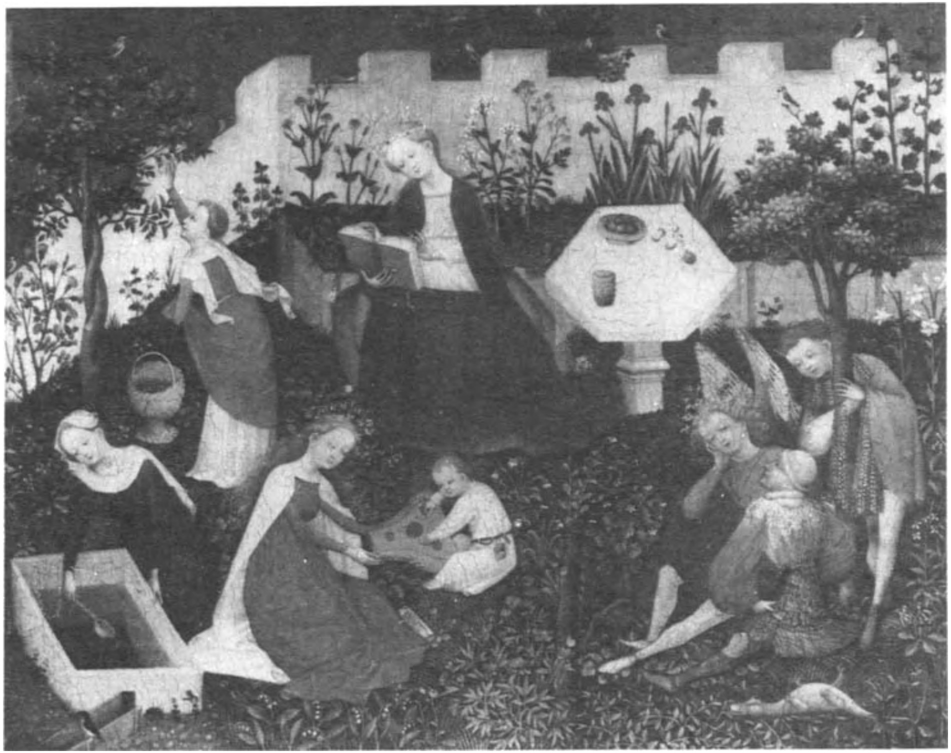

Plate 1. *Garden of Paradise*, Historisches Museum, Frankfurt am Main.

Vous aportastes la flor
Et l'odor
Par cui Paradis
Nu fu overs et pramis.[17]

[Late thirteenth century.]

[Sweet sovereign lady, pure lily flower, garden full of sweetness where the holy fruit was gathered, sovereign rose tree chosen above all others, you have borne the flower and the perfume by which paradise was opened and promised to us.]

Guillaume de Deguilleville's *Pélerinage de l'âme* presents Mary as the green tree and Christ as her apple.[18] *Adam lay ybounden* celebrates the double symbolism of the apple:

Ne had the apple taken been, the apple taken been,
Ne had never our Lady a-been heaven queen.[19]

The Frankfurt *Garden of Paradise* (Plate 1), at first sight a vision of heaven as an aristocratic pleasure-garden, is in fact planted with typological and liturgical imagery.[20] It is also the garden of the Fall inverted, as the dead dragon on the right shows: paradise regained. The cherries are a symbol of love ('I gave my love a cherry . . . '). Here they symbolize heavenly love, parallel to the Eden apple.[21] The double stem of their tree may symbolize the Trees of Life and Knowledge intertwined, or the Incarnation.[22] A grafted stem is another dual symbol of sacred and profane love; de Deguilleville calls Mary a pure graft onto the stock of Adam.[23] Cherries are the fruit of paradise, associated with the Christ-child. Memling, who often uses the apple as symbol of the Incarnation, shows the child holding cherries and reaching for an apple in the Uffizi *Madonna and Child with Angels*.[24]

Religious poems often borrow secular styles. The following one begins like a secular *chanson d'aventure*: the poet rides or walks out into a pleasant landscape and encounters a maiden singing of love:

I passed through a garden green,
I found a herber [*flower-garden/orchard*] made full new—
A seemlier sight I have not seen;
On ilke [*every*] tree sang a turtle true [*faithful*]—

Therein a maiden bright of hue,
And ever she sang, and never she ceased.
These were the notes that she gan show [*revealed*]
Verbum caro factum est. . . [25]

The maiden is later unambiguously identified as Mary. Here the incarnation is associated with the Fall—we find a garden *made full new*, a paradise regained—and with a love-garden, containing *turtle true* and fair maiden. But here there is no betrayal (l. 4), and the song is without end (l. 6).

Here the surprise lay in realizing that the *garden green* revealed divine rather than earthly love. Longer works exploit the possibility of shifts from one type of garden to another on a larger scale. Sometimes earthly gardens rise on the scale of being, as when the narrator of *Pearl* (c. 1400) begins in a mortal garden of unrequited love and then finds himself in a dream in an eternal landscape, with a vision of paradise and the heavenly city. All too often, however, they fall. I would like to look at two examples: the *Roman de la Rose* and Chaucer's *Merchant's Tale.*

For many readers, the *Roman de la Rose* represents the archetypal mediaeval love-garden. When we say that, we are thinking of the first part, written by Guillaume de Lorris about 1230:

> In a dream the young hero enters a walled garden. Kept outside are several vices including hate, but also several states which religion does not consider vices at all, like Poverty, Age and Sorrow. Idleness, the gatekeeper, lets him in. The owner is Delight. Within this enclosure the hero submits the overlordship of the god Amor and attempts against many setbacks to win the Rose.

However idealistically it is portrayed, the rose represents the lady's sexual favours. The walled garden represents a self-contained world, a microcosm. It is both a sociological allegory—an analysis of courtly leisure—and a psychological allegory, the analysis of a love-affair. Dream vision and allegory are both genres originally associated with the analysis of serious theological and philosophical subjects. In the walled garden, however, delight and desire are the highest values. There are a few disturbing references, like the fountain of Narcissus, a 'perilous mirror',[26] which brought death, a reminder of the double face of carnal love. But only one voice speaks against the lover's enslavement to passion: Reason tries to dissuade him from capitulation to the overlordship of Amor. He rejects her: Amor rules him, holds the key to his heart and has locked it. Reason's intervention is controversial. In mediaeval models of the soul she is not only a psychological power but a theological one, the image of God in man, a link between earthly and heavenly life. Human reason, rightly used, is a line back to the divine mind. She represents an order of priorities ignored by the garden's pretensions to represent a total world.[27]

The *Roman* attracted controversy. It was popular, surviving in nearly 250 manuscripts. In particular it prompted a fifteenth-century literary debate, the *Querelle de la Rose.* There were several charges against the poem, especially against the second part (c. 1275) by Jean de Meun, but one is of interest for our subject and applies to the whole work. It was launched by the theologian Jean Gerson (1362–1428). Gerson, calling the poem's hero *fol amoureux*, pinpoints the clash of priorities, the inversion of values. Who destroyed Troy? *Fol amoureux.* Who killed Hector, Achilles and Priam? *Fol amoureux.* Who forgets God, the saints, paradise and his own ultimate end? *Fol amoureux.*[28] The objection here is really that the poem sets up passion as an intellectually respectable authority, commanding the attention of the mind, and presented as a noble, idealized devotion. A delusion which overturns God's order; the lover's preference for Amor over Reason is a version of the primal sin. It puts emotion and sensation over reason: exactly what, according to the theologians, happened in Eden.[29]

One sixteenth-century commentator said that the garden represented carnal voluptuousness: the pursuit of all vices and the flight from all virtues;[30] others saw it as an allegory of heaven. Clement Marot gives a fourfold allegorical exegesis of the rose: it is the papal rose of wisdom, fidelity and purity, it is Grace, Mary, or eternal bliss.[31] So some readers interpreted the poem *in bono*, some *in malo.*

Some twentieth-century critics, such as C.S. Lewis, have accepted the surface sense as the presiding one: the garden *does* celebrate a genuine idealization and civilizing of sexual passion; Reason represents an ultimately higher authority, but her voice does not entirely demolish the claims of the vision of human love.[32] Another school, led by D.W. Robertson, has assumed that all serious mediaeval literature was based in the Augustinian polarities of *caritas* and *cupiditas*: either a work teaches *caritas* or, if it seems to endorse worldly values, it is really attacking them under a veil of irony and allegory. So most literary gardens treat of the true paradise or warn of the Fall.[33] For D.W. Robertson, the *Roman de la Rose* is 'a humorous and witty retelling of the story of the Fall'.[34]

So, since Robertson, the serpent of a moralistic and allegorical criticism has entered the garden of mediaeval literary studies. It has sharpened wits—as one would expect—and opened eyes, although in the hands of some it has become a rather rigidly single-minded agent of interpretation. The main problem is tone of voice: it is not enough in literary criticism to say that a particular reading is possible; one has to judge whether the writing makes it the most probable one. One example: Reason compares a lover's pains to a hermit's or a Cistercian's. Is it a reference to absolute spiritual values which overturns the assumptions of all the rest of the narrative? Or a joke, but one capable of recalling—momentarily—such values, and thus giving a certain fragility and tension to the bright worldly vision? Sophisticated mediaeval secular works rarely shout their message; rather they have the capacity to provoke further debate, a subsequent unravelling of the topic they treat. They sometimes, as we have seen with *Cligés*, contain the seeds of their own destruction, or modification, for the meditative reader.

Interestingly, already in the thirteenth century the second author of the *Roman de la Rose*, Jean de Meun, had also condemned the first garden. He calls it a fable, a trifle, compared with the truth of the eternal park of the Lamb.[35] The first garden will fade; its waters 'inebriate the living with death' (l. 20595). Jean de Meun, a more intellectual and speculative writer than de Lorris, but also more cynical about love and women, allied this park of the Lamb with a bold doctrine of sexual relations: he says those who apply themselves assiduously to reproduction will win places in heaven (ll. 19497-868, 20607-664). He draws here on twelfth-century speculations, for example in the writing of Alain de Lille,[36] about the relations of sex and nature to God's eternal order. Jean's utilitarian justification of sex, though it shocked some contemporaries with its bawdy language and disregard for marriage,[37] fits with his orthodox theological grounds for condemning the delights of the rose garden as transient and delusory. It avoids the rebellious hubris of Amor, a passion claiming the devotion due to a god; and sex as an instrument of reproduction is a weapon against Atropos, preserving the created form of the species in the face of the continual death of matter. It obediently serves the divine plan.

I would like now to turn to a work which has the entangled traditions of gardens of love and the garden of the Fall at its centre: Chaucer's *Merchant's Tale*. The plot is an elaborated *fabliau*:

> January, an aging, money-loving merchant, decides after a life of sensual pleasure to marry; 'A wife is God's gift'; all other gifts (property, lands, furniture. . .) pass away. 'A wife will last.'

> He discusses marriage, confident in his arguments: 'Wedlock is so easy and so clean,/That in this world it is a paradise. . . To take a wife it is a glorious thing'—especially when a man is old. A wife—bless me!—how can a man have any trouble who has a wife? A wife is his terrestrial paradise. A wife is always so obedient:
> ' "Do this!" saith he. "All ready, sir", saith she.'
>
> January is sure he is right: marriage is 'That holy bond/With which that God first man and woman bound. . . a full great sacrament'. He disregards his friend's warning, ' "Paraunter [perhaps] she may be your purgatory" ', and chooses May, low-born but young and luscious.
>
> May acquires a secret admirer. January builds a private walled garden, to enjoy his leisurely love-making during the afternoons. Only he has the key. His garden is fairer than the *Roman de la Rose* garden.
>
> January is struck blind. He holds on to May wherever he goes, afraid she may stray. The young lover makes a duplicate garden-key, enters and hides up a pear tree. May gets January to let her climb on his back to get into the tree to pick a pear. She enjoys a brief copulation in the tree.
>
> This is seen by Pluto and Proserpine, king and queen 'of Fairy'. Pluto decides to give the husband back his sight. Proserpine retaliates by making May provide an adequate answer, ' "And all women after her, for her sake" '.
>
> January: ' "Help, alas. . . lady. . . What dost thou?" ' May says she was told she could cure him by struggling with a man in a tree. January: ' "*Struggle*. . . ? in it went!. . . I saw it with mine eyen!" '. May replies that obviously he has not got his perfect sight back. January dotingly acquiesces, stroking her womb.[38]

There are so many things one could say about a narrative so delightfully ironic. Clearly the layout for the illicit sex recreates the scene of the Fall: deceiver hidden in a fruit tree in a garden, with husband and wife standing beside it. The wife's desire for fruit goes with deceit of her husband, and in concupiscence she allies herself with the tempter in the tree. But this couple do not experience a fall from innocence in their garden: the tale shows us people in a fallen state from the beginning. They are in a fallen state and they love it. January opts for his 'terrestrial paradise': ' "I shall have mine heaven in earth here" ' (l. 1647). He is in love with the deceitful world (that is why he acquiesces, to the puzzlement of some modern readers, so readily in May's unlikely explanation). Similarly, though January only becomes physically blind half-way through, he has shown moral and intellectual blindness throughout.

There is cupidity as well as concupiscence: the locked garden symbolizes May and her womb, more possession than person. It makes her also, however, an inverted symbol of Mary, the *hortus conclusus*. Similarly, January's lascivious summons echoes the Song of Songs: '"Rise up... Come forth... the garden is enclosed all about"' (ll. 2138-45). The surface is blasphemous, but these references to salvation, amid willing damnation, are witnesses to the reader of a perspective by which what is shown may be judged. The tale offers parodies of Eden, of heaven, of courtly love and of the business world (May is an investment, the 'fruit' of an old man's 'treasure'), all using the imagery of the garden. Their very entanglement projects a state of fallen will and fallen intellect. The act of reading, the comic experience, involves a disentangling, a reordering, on the part of the reader.

Why does divine intervention within the story take the form of Pluto and Proserpine? The poem is based on a folk tale, the *Enchanted Pear Tree*; in some versions it is Christ and St Peter who look down and see what is happening.[39] The answer must be partly that Pluto and Proserpine recall yet another literary garden tradition. Their story is told by Ovid (*Metamorphoses* 5.385-572) and Claudian (*De Raptu Proserpinae*), whose descriptions of Proserpine's grove were major sources for the rhetorical traditions of the *locus amoenus*. Pluto, like January, was old; his rape caused the order of nature to be broken, no fruitfulness, no harvest. We see the same dislocation of natural order in the disparity between May and January.

There is another reason; Proserpine was condemned to Hades for eating a pomegranate, *poeniceum... pomum*, from a tree, 'while she wandered in cultivated gardens'.[40] Mediaeval allegorical interpreters of Ovid identified Pluto with the devil and the garden as the soul which willingly acquiesces in worldly snares. For some critics the implications of this are clear: Pluto and Proserpine are 'little more than personified abstractions'; Pluto is Satan and January and May have sold themselves to the devil.[41] But Chaucer's tone is more complex: Pluto and Proserpine are king and queen 'of Fairy', and as an old husband with a contentious wife, Pluto recalls a stock *fabliau* figure. He is also god of wealth. Pluto, like the garden, is an image of multiple meaning and tone.

The *Enchanted Pear Tree* tale, with its obvious sexual symbolism of garden, tree and pear, is extant in many forms, including Boccaccio's Decameron (2.10). I would like to end by looking at two offshoots of it, the lyric 'I have a new garden' and the 'Cherry Tree Carol'. They both use the same themes: the parallels of garden and womb, fruit tree and male seducer, fruit and baby. Both contain a woman's request; the first tells of deception, the second of suspicion of deception which is disarmed by a very different kind of female triumph than the wife's smart answer in the original folk tale. The obvious difference between the two poems is that in one the garden with the wondrous fruit tree descends, to become a garden of simple lust, while in the other it is transformed into a miracle of the Virgin Birth and Incarnation. The carol is one of the legends of the holy family and the infancy of Christ (it appears in the *Gospel of Pseudo-Matthew*, 20). I have put the two poems side by side because only by seeing the lewd levity customarily associated with the motifs of garden, fruit tree and adultery, derived from the folk-tale tradition, can one appreciate the daring with which the carol employs these motifs. The Saviour replies to Joseph's jibe because, in this holy parody, he is both lover and fruit. Just as Joseph's false perceptions are dispelled by the miracle, so the garden of lust is turned into a garden of divine love.

> I have a new garden,
> And new is begun:
> Such another garden
> Know I not under sun.
>
> In the middes of my garden
> Is a peryr [pear tree] set,
> And it will none pear bearn [bear no pear]
> But a Pear-Jonette [a species of pear: St John's Pear. Also a pun: 'by John'.]
>
> The fairest maid of this town
> Prayed me
> For to griffen her a grif [graft her a shoot]
> Of mine pery-tree. . .
>
> And I griffed her
> Right up in her homb:
> And by that day twenty weeks
> It was quick in her womb.

That day twelve-month
That maid I met:
She said it was a Pear-Robert [another species: 'By Robert'!],
Not a Pear-Jonette.[42]

[Early fifteenth century.]

Cherry Tree Carol

Joseph was an old man,
And an old man was he,
And he married Mary,
The Queen of Galilee. . .

Joseph and Mary walked
Through a garden gay
Where the cherries they grew
Upon every tree.

O then bespoke Mary
With words both meek and mild:
'O gather me cherries Joseph,
They run so in my mind'. [Other versions: 'For I am with child'.]

And then replied Joseph
With words so unkind:
'O let him gather thee cherries
That got thee with child'.

O then bespoke our Saviour,
All in his mother's womb:
'Bow down, good cherry tree,
To my mother's hand'.

The uppermost sprig
Bowed down to Mary's knee:
'Thus you may see, Joseph,
These cherries are for me'.[43]

Notes

1. D. Pearsall and E. Salter, *Landscapes and Seasons of the Medieval World* (London: Paul Elek, 1973); R. Tuve, *Seasons and Months: Studies in a Tradition of Middle English Poetry* (Paris: Librairie Universitaire, 1933).
2. C. Brown (ed.), *English of the XIIIth Century* (Oxford: Clarendon Press,

1932), pp. 145-46 n. 81; this and all subsequent quotations from Middle English have been changed into modernized spelling. On Spring, love and youth, see Tuve, *Seasons and Months*, pp. 11-21, 51-58; P. Tristram, *Figures of Life and Death in Medieval English Poetry* (London: Paul Elek, 1975), pp. 80-82, 87-89, 98-113.

3. Colin Muset (see J. Bédier [ed.], *De Nicolao Museto* [Paris: E. Bouillon, 1893], p. 95).

4. Bédier, *Nicolao Museto*, p. 85.

5. *Oxford English Dictionary*, see under 'paradise', SB.; Pearsall and Salter, *Landscapes*, p. 24 n. 5.

6. *Epithalamium de Nuptiss Honorii Augusti*, ll. 49-85; *De Raptu Prosperpinae*, II, ll. 101-117, in M. Platnauer (ed.), *Claudian* (2 vols.; London: Heinemann, 1922).

7. See E.R. Curtis, *European Literature in the Latin Middle Ages* (London: Routledge, 1953), pp. 195-202.

8. John Gower, balade 37, ll. 1-14, in G.C. MacCaulay (ed.), *Works*. I. *The French Works* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1899).

9. *Le roman de Tristan en prose*, III (ed. R. Curtis; Cambridge: Brewer, 1985), pp. 225-28.

10. G. Toja (ed.), *Lirica cortese d'oïl* (Bologna: R. Pàtron, 1966), p. 157.

11. Chrétien de Troyes, *Cligés* (Classiques francais du moyen age, 84; ed. A. Micha; Paris; Champion, 1957), ll. 6259-6466.

12. D.W. Robertson, Jr, 'The Doctrine of Charity in Medieval Literary Gardens: A Topical Approach through Symbolism and Allegory', *Speculum* 26 (1951), pp. 24-49, esp. pp. 39-40.

13. P. Piehler, *The Visionary Landscape* (London: Edward Arnold, 1971), pp. 100-104.

14. See L. Polak, 'Cligés, Fénice et l'arbre de'amour', *Romania* 93 (1972), pp. 302-16; *idem*, *Cligés* (Paris: Grant & Cutler, 1982), pp. 61-69.

15. M. Vloberg, *La Madonne aux Roses* (Paris: Arthaud, 1930); E.M. Vetter, *Maria im Rosenhag* (Dusseldorf: L. Schwann, 1956); Pearsall and Salter, *Landscapes*, pp. 108-110.

16. Jerome, Epistle 22, in *Corpus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Latinorum* 54 (Vienna: Turnhoat, 1909), p. 173.

17. 'Virgene, pucele roiaux', ll. 10-18, in P. Menard (ed.), *Les Poésies de Guillaume le Vinier* (Geneva: Droz, 1970), pp. 145-48.

18. Guillaume de Deguilleville, *Le pélerinage de l'âme* (ed. J.J. Dturzinger; London: Roxburghe Club, 1895), ll. 5591-6702. For Mary as tree, garden, or branch on the rod of Jesse, see R. Woolf, *The English Religious Lyric in the Middle Ages* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1968), pp. 285-91; M.L. d'Ancona, *The Iconography of the Immaculate Conception in the Middle Ages and the Early Renaissance* (New York: College Art Association of America, 1957), pp. 48-50.

19. C. Brown (ed.), *Religious Lyrics of the XVth Century* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1939), p. 120 n. 83.

20. E.M. Vetter, 'Das Frankfurter Paradiesgärtlein', *Heidelberger Jahrbürcher* 9 (1965), pp. 102-46; Pearsall and Salter, *Landscapes*, pp. 109-10.

21. E. Wolffhardt, 'Beiträge zur Pflanzensymbolik: Über die Pflanzen des Frankfurter Paradiesgärtleins', *Zeitschrift für Kunstwissenschaft* 8 (1954), pp. 177-96, esp. p. 178; Vetter, 'Paradiesgärtlein', pp. 108-109; E. Guldan, *Eva und Maria* (Graz and Cologne: Böhlaw, 1966), pp. 108-16.

22. Vetter, 'Paradiesgärtlein', pp. 106-107 nn. 55, 56.

23. De Deguilleville, *Pélerinage*, ll. 5674-5700.

24. Plate 42, M. Cort and G.T. Faggin (eds.), *L'opera completa di Memling* (Milan: Rizzoli, 1969). Also C. Crivelli, *Tutta la Pittura di Crivelli* (ed. A. Bovero; Milan: Rizzoli, 1961), figs. 87, 91; *Joos van Cleve* (ed. L. von Baldass; Vienna: Kristall, 1925), figs. 35, 36, 46 [a], 71 [a], 72. Cherries are offered to the Child in the Wakefield *Second Shepherds Play*; see *The Wakefield Pageants in the Townley Cycle* (ed. A.C. Cawley; Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1958), p. 718.

25. Brown, *Religious Lyrics*, p. 115 n. 78. See Woolf, *Religious Lyric*, pp. 137, 260-61. Pearsall and Salter (*Landscapes*, pp. 55-57) point to this poem and the Frankfurt *Garden of Paradise* as examples of the readiness of fourteenth- and fifteenth-century artists to celebrate eternal events through images of natural beauty.

26. *Le Roman de la Rose*, I (ed. F. Lecoy; Paris: Champion, 1976), l. 1569.

27. Augustine, *De Trinitate*, XIV (ed. J.-P. Migne; Patrologia Latina, 42; Paris: Migne, 1845), chs. 4, 8; D. Cairns, *The Image of God in Man* (London: SCM Press, 1953), pp. 32-39, 110-20.

28. J. Gerson, 'Contre le Roman de la Rose', in *Oeuvres Complètes*, VII (ed. Mgr. Glorieux; Paris: Desclée, 1966), p. 307. On the debate see J.L. Baird and J.R. Kane, *La Quarrelle de la Rose: Letters and Documents* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1978).

29. Augustine, *De Trinitate*, XXII, ch. 12 (17).

30. The Collins Gloss, in M. Luria (trans.), *A Reader's Guide to the Roman de la Rose* (Connecticut: Hamden, 1982), p. 207.

31. Luria, *Reader's Guide*, pp. 205-206.

32. *The Allegory of Love* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1936), ch. 3.

33. Robertson, *Gardens*; and *idem*, *A Preface to Chaucer* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1962), pp. 91-104, 196-207, 361-65.

34. Robertson, *Gardens*, p. 43.

35. *Le Roman de la Rose*, III (ed. F. Lecoy; Paris: Champion, 1982), lines 19475-20637.

36. Alain de Lille, *The Plaint of Nature* (ed. J.J. Sheridan; Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Medieval Studies, 1980), prose 4, esp. pp. 145-46.

37. Cristine de Pisan (Luria, *Reader's Guide*, pp. 192, 202).

38. For the complete poem, see F.N. Robinson (ed.), *Complete Works of Geoffery Chaucer* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1966), pp. 115-27.

39. W.F. Bryan and G. Dempster, *Sources and Analogues of Chaucer's Canterbury Tales* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1941), pp. 341-56; A.C. Lee, *The Decameron: Its Sources and Analogues* (London: Longmans, 1909), pp. 236-44.

40. *Metamorphoses*, V, 535-36.

41. Robertson, *Preface*, p. 250; M.A. Dalbey, 'The Devil in the Garden: Pluto

and Proserpine in Chaucer's Merchant's Tale', *Neuphilologische Mitteilungen* 75 (1974), pp. 408-15.

42 R.H. Robbins (ed.), *Secular Lyrics of the XIVth and XVth Centuries* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1955), pp. 15-16 n. 21.

43. B.A. Rosenburg, 'The "Cherry Tree Carol" and the *Merchant's Tale*', *Chaucer Review* 5 (1971), pp. 264-76. This version was collected in the nineteenth century from an eighteenth-century broadside. Another version appears in P. Dearmer, R. Vaughan Williams and M. Shaw (eds.), *The Oxford Book of Carols* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1928), pp. 143-46.

MILTON'S EDEN

Gordon Campbell

The central obstacle facing anyone who wishes to study Milton's Eden is a massive linguistic hurdle: Milton read accounts of Eden in ten languages other than his own. In the poem, *Ad Patrem*, Milton thanks his father for paying for tuition in Latin, Greek, Hebrew, French and Italian in the years before he went to school at the age of twelve. By the time he travelled to Italy in 1638 he had composed a considerable body of poems in Latin, and a smaller number in Greek and Italian, and at some point had acquired enough Spanish to merit its inclusion in Antonio Francini's ode in praise of Milton (*Ch'ode oltr'all' Anglia il suo più degno Idioma/Spagna, Francia, Toscana, e Grecia e Roma*). After he returned from Italy he became a schoolmaster, and his nephew Edward Phillips, who was one of his pupils, recalled fifty-four years later that as a ten-year-old, although he was 'studiously employed in conquering the Greek and Latin tongues' and mastering the literatures in those languages, this task did not 'hinder the attaining to the chief Oriental languages, viz, the Hebrew, Chaldee and Syriac, so far as to go through the Pentateuch... in Hebrew, to make a good entrance into the Targum or Chaldee Paraphrase, and to understand several chapters of St Matthew in the Syriac Testament'; Milton had clearly acquired a command of Aramaic ('Chaldee') and Syriac (which he seems to have regarded as a separate language). At some point in 1652, the year in which Milton went totally blind, he began to take lessons in Dutch from Roger Williams, in exchange for practice in 'many more languages'. Claims for Milton's knowledge of a tenth language, Anglo-Saxon, are based on source study rather than on contemporary testimony, and must be regarded as tentative.

Milton's command of this formidable range of languages means that the range of sources available to him is greater than that on which ordinary mortals can draw, and his lifelong study of the literature written in those languages gives his poems a distinctly literary cast.

Milton was able to continue his study of various literatures after he went blind by enlisting his younger daughters, who were (in the words of Edward Phillips)

> condemned to the performance of reading and exactly pronouncing of all the languages of whatever book he should at one time or another see fit to peruse, viz. the Hebrew (and I think the Syriac), the Greek, the Latin, the Italian, Spanish and French. All. . . without understanding one word.

It comes as no surprise to discover that the Eden of *Paradise Lost* contains a markedly literary garden which derives from a multitude of literary sources, and that each of the ten languages which Milton read has produced sources for his Eden. In the modern languages, to name only one important source in each, Milton read, in French, Du Bartas's poem, *La Sepmaine*; in Italian, Giambattista Andreini's play, *L'Adamo*; in Spanish, Alonso de Acevedo's poem, *Creacion del Mundo*, and in Dutch, Vondel's play, *Adam in Ballingschap*; for all of these, and for many other poems and plays written in these languages, good cases for influence on Milton's Eden have been made.

The ancient languages present an even more daunting prospect. Milton knew the Hebrew text of the Bible well enough to translate some of the Psalms into English and (in one case) Greek. But it is not clear, to me at least, how Milton interpreted the unadorned Hebrew text of the Old Testament. It is often casually assumed that he was guided by the Masoretic vocalization, and this is at least a partial truth, but there is also evidence that on occasion he preferred the Greek of the LXX to the pointing offered by the Masoretes when interpreting the Hebrew text. In the seventeenth century, the Hebrew texts were often read with the assistance of Aramaic commentaries, the Targumim. Students of Milton do not always recognize a targum when they encounter one in the darkness of another language. Thus the two standard translations of Milton's Latin theological treatise, *De Doctrina Christiana*, record Milton's reference to 'the three most ancient Jewish commentators, Onkelos, Jonathan and Hierosolymitanus'; neither translator recognized the Jerusalem Targum lurking behind the mysterious commentator Hierosolymitanus. In Greek, in addition to the LXX and the corpus of ancient Greek poetry, Milton could draw on the Greek fathers, for whom Milton had unusual sympathies; in the case of his depiction of Eden, he drew on the works of the Cappadocian fathers: the περι κοσμος of Gregory Nazianzus which (like the *Carmen de Deo* of

Dracontius) reflects its hexameral subject in its choice of metre; and of course Basil the Great, whose *Hexaemeron* lit a torch which was passed to his brother Gregory of Nyssa and thence to Greek hexameral writers such as George of Pisidia, whose *Hexameron*, with its strong colouring of classical cosmological accounts, was often printed in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The largest tradition on which Milton could draw was, of course, the vast succession of Latin works, a tradition founded, I suppose, by St Ambrose, whose various hexameral works were much loved by the humanists of the Renaissance; his *De Paradiso* (like *Paradise Lost*) set paradise on a mountain. It should be remembered that this Latin tradition, which includes scores of hexameral works, extends continuously to Milton's own time, to works such as Grotius's tragedy, *Adamus Exul*, on which Milton drew. Indeed, one eighteenth-century scholar, William Lauder, was so determined to show that Milton had stolen passages from Grotius that he produced an edition of *Adamus Exul* into which he interpolated Latin translations of various passages from *Paradise Lost*. The final two languages about which the student of Milton's Eden must fret are Anglo-Saxon (particularly the *Genesis* poem which was published by Milton's friend Francis Junius in 1655) and Syriac, the language most neglected by Miltonists; no Miltonist has tried to assess the influence of the Peshitta on *Paradise Lost*. In addition to sources in these ten languages, one should take note of the Latin translations of the Ethiopic Old Testament and of the Samaritan Pentateuch, both of which were available in Walton's polyglot of 1657, in the publication of which Milton had played a small part.

Milton's learning is often overestimated—his command of mediaeval theology, for example, was slight—but one can nonetheless assume with some certainty that Milton was familiar with the accounts which I have mentioned (with the possible exception of the Anglo-Saxon *Genesis*) and with many others. The most frustrating accounts, for the jobbing Miltonist, are ones to which Milton could not have had access, but which he knew about through channels which are lost to us. Milton's paradise, for example, is guarded by a detachment of angels under the command of Gabriel. The general idea, and some of the details, derives from the Ethiopic *Book of Enoch*, which was first exhumed from the sands of Egypt in the nineteenth century.

With such a vast literary tradition behind Milton's account, his Eden is inevitably a very literary creation; examination of individual phrases often reveals them to be a kind of palimpsest with phrases by earlier writers lying underneath. Sometimes direct quotations appear. When Eve proposes that she and Adam separate in the interests of labour efficiency, for example, Adam quotes Cicero (without an oral footnote) to the effect that 'solitude sometimes is best society'. There are hundreds of such local examples of sources close to the surface of the text, but there is also a larger sense in which Milton's account of the Fall has been shaped by a literary tradition. Milton's version of the Fall is not expounded as a straightforward narrative, but is rather conceived as a tragedy. At the beginning of Book IX of *Paradise Lost*, the narrator's voice announces that he will now 'change these notes to tragic'. The point may be illustrated by contrast with an account of the Fall which is emphatically not tragic, that contained in Milton's Latin theological treatise. The sin of Adam and Eve, Milton explains,

> was a most atrocious offence, and. . . broke every part of the law. For what fault is there which man did not commit in commencing this sin? He was to be condemned both for trusting Satan and for not trusting God; he was faithless, ungrateful, disobedient, greedy, uxorious; she, negligent of her husband's welfare; both of them committed theft, robbery with violence, murder against their children (i.e. the whole human race); each was sacrilegious and deceitful, cunningly aspiring to divinity although thoroughly unworthy of it, proud and arrogant.

That is a wholly unsympathetic account of Adam and Eve, and contrasts starkly with the version in Book IX of *Paradise Lost*, in which Adam and Eve are endowed with characters, and the account of the Fall induces a sense of tragic loss. In the poem, Milton motivates the Fall so strongly that his account comes perilously close to justifying their action. Eve is beguiled by Satan, and Adam chooses to fall because of his love for Eve. At the end of the poem when Adam and Eve are expelled from the garden, we do not nod in satisfaction at their receiving of their just deserts, but rather are moved by their desolation and their sense of hope. This sense may have been felt more acutely by the seventeenth-century reader, for just as 'Levi also paid tithes in Abraham, for he was yet in the loins of his father, when Melchisedec met him' (Heb. 7.9-10), so the homuncular theory of human reproduction meant that when Adam and Eve fell, so the reader fell, for he was present in the loins of Adam.

Milton's account of the Fall is literary, as are the details of his description of Eden and its garden, but that does not mean that his Eden does not have characteristics which distinguish it from earlier treatments of the theme. Milton avoids the hot-blooded debates about the exact location of Eden, contriving to accommodate competing theories which located it at the confluence of the Tigris and the Euphrates, at the foot of Mount Niphates, and on the equator. As for its present location, Milton argues that it was washed down the Tigris into the Persian Gulf, where it became 'an island salt and bare'—possibly Kharg Island, the Iranian oil terminal. Milton draws his description of Eden from many sources, chief of which is probably Philo's *Quaestiones et Solutiones in Genesim et Exodum*, but he freely adjusts details in the light of contemporary knowledge and his own biblical exegesis:

> Southward through Eden went a river large,
> Nor changed his course, but through the shaggy hill
> Passed underneath ingulfed, for God had thrown
> That mountain as his garden mould high raised
> Upon the rapid current, which through veins
> Of porous earth with kindly thirst up drawn,
> Rose a fresh fountain, and with many a rill
> Watered the garden.

The system of irrigation is worthy of note. Milton sides with Jerome in favour of a fountain, against those (such as the AV translators) who preferred a mist. The phrase about 'veins of porous earth with kindly thirst up drawn' suggests some kind of strenuous capillary action, but the line has never been studied in the context of the hydromechanics available to Milton; one wonders about the extent to which Italian studies of the subject had been disseminated.

The garden in the east of Milton's Eden has two human residents whose way of life differs in several respects from that of their literary forebears, and I should like to conclude by mentioning four elements which may seem surprising to students of earlier gardens:

1. work,
2. sexual activity,
3. entertaining,
4. Adam's request for a wife.

First, work. In earlier versions of the garden, especially visual depictions, Adam and Eve tend to stand about contemplatively with a few symbolic sheep. In the militantly Protestant world of Milton's poem, however, work is an ennobling necessity rather than a punishment for the Fall, and he issues his Adam and Eve with garden shears. Here is Adam in a sententious vein:

> . . . other creatures all day long
> Rove idle unemployed, and less need rest;
> Man hath his daily work of body or mind
> Appointed, which declares his dignity,
> And the regard of heaven on all his ways;
> While other animals unactive range,
> And of their doings God takes no account.

This is the world of the Protestant work-ethic—there are no scroungers in Milton's Eden. One might add that gardening had become fashionable in upper-class circles, that gardening was sometimes regarded as emblematic of political activity, as in Shakespeare's *Richard II*, and that Virgil's *Georgics* had risen in popularity. The gardening tools were not, one should note, of Wilkinson standard. Eve is equipped with

> . . . such gardening tools as art yet rude,
> Guiltless of fire had formed, or angels brought.

In Milton's version of the Fall, attitudes to work assume considerable importance. Eve observes that when she and her husband work together they spend too much time exchanging loving glances,

> For while so near each other thus all day
> Our task we choose, what wonder if so near
> Looks intervene and smiles, or object new
> Casual discourse draws on, which intermits
> Our day's work brought to little, though begun
> Early, and the hour of supper comes unearned.

She therefore suggests that it would be more efficient to work separately, at least (she adds coyly) 'till more hands/Aid us'. But Milton's God is not a labour-efficiency expert. Adam replies with sentiments designed to soothe Eve and to irritate twentieth-century feminists:

> . . . for nothing lovelier can be found
> In woman, than to study household good,
> And good works in her husband to promote.

Adam concludes that they should work together to avoid danger, and Eve responds with the accusation that he does not trust her:

> But that thou shouldst my firmness therefore doubt
> To God or thee, because we have a foe
> May tempt it, I expected not to hear.

After more bargaining Adam yields, and their separation provides

Satan with the opportunity to corrupt Eve. In the view of Milton, who was never forced to work by financial necessity, work was an ennobling activity which should not be allowed to become the highest goal in life.

Milton's attitude to work may seem commonplace, but his celebration of sexuality in *Paradise Lost* may seem surprising in a Puritan poet. It is a popular misconception that Puritans were uneasy about sexuality. In fact it was the Anglicans who flirted with celibacy, whilst the Puritans were sexual enthusiasts. Indeed, Milton even advocated polygamy, as did other radicals. In Milton's Eden, the prelapsarian Adam and Eve enjoy full conjugal relations. Celibate mediaeval theologians may have agonized about how an unfallen Adam and Eve would have propagated *sine carnis incentivo*, but thrice-married Milton ushered his Adam and Eve 'into their inmost bower'; because they were naked already, they were 'eased the putting off/These troublesome disguises which we wear' and

> Straight side by side were laid, nor turned I ween
> Adam from his fair spouse, nor Eve the rites
> Mysterious of connubial love refused:
> Whatever hypocrites austerely talk
> Of purity and place and innocence,
> Defaming as impure what God declares
> Pure, and commands to some, leaves free to all.

Not only is there healthy sexuality in Milton's Eden, but he also raises the prospect of sexuality in heaven. Adam asks a series of questions of Raphael, and finally arrives at the one which really interests him:

> Bear with me then, if lawful what I ask;
> Love not the heavenly spirits, and how their love
> Express they, by looks only, or do they mix
> Irradiance, virtual or immediate touch?

Raphael answers with a description of angelic love-making, but it is possible that his smile, which glows 'celestial rosy red', indicates a degree of angelic embarrassment.

Europeans have enjoyed entertaining friends to lunch since Roman times, and Milton's Adam and Eve share this enthusiasm. They are short of people to invite for lunch, so Milton sends the angel Raphael instead. As soon as Eve learns that Adam is bringing Raphael home for lunch, she begins to think about the menu:

> She turns, on hospitable thoughts intent
> What choice to choose for delicacy best,
> What order, so contrived as not to mix
> Tastes, not well joined, inelegant, but bring
> Taste after taste upheld with kindliest change.

Adam goes to greet Raphael, and they fall into conversation. As every hostess knows, there is nothing more frustrating than putting a meal on the table and not being able to get the men to stop talking long enough to come to the table before it gets cold. In Milton's account, 'a while discourse they hold', but he adds reassuringly that there is 'no fear lest dinner cool', because in the absence of postlapsarian fire Eve has chosen to prepare a cold meal appropriate to the *al fresco* setting. She of course serves a vegetarian meal, with no alcohol, and in the absence of servants 'at table Eve/Ministered naked'. Milton raises the possibility of Raphael becoming enamoured at the sight of the world's first naked waitress, but assures us that 'love unlibidinous reigned'. They no sooner sit down to lunch when a terrible thought strikes Adam. Do angels eat? Raphael, the model guest, offers assurances, and then Milton adds his own gloss:

> . . . So down they sat
> And to their viands fell, nor seemingly
> The angel, nor in mist, the common gloss
> Of theologians, but with keen despatch
> Of real hunger, and concoctive heat
> To transubstantiate; what redounds, transpires
> Through spirits with ease.

The digestive sense of 'transubstantiate' alerts us to the polemical nature of the passage: the theologians are of course wicked Papists who have based their assertion of the immateriality of angels on the apocryphal Book of Tobit, in which Raphael only pretends to eat. Milton's Protestant angelology makes him a convinced materialist, and he presses the point home by raising the question of undigested fibre: it 'transpires through spirits with ease', a line which raises in Milton's editors the spectre of angelic toilets, but in fact, as the word 'transpires' reminds us, refers to the angelic practice of emitting waste through the pores of the skin.

The narrative of *Paradise Lost* is not chronological, and in Book VIII Adam is shown as a bachelor. He occupies himself by naming the animals, and notices that they always approach in pairs, 'two and two'.

He decides to have a word with God, to whom he has direct access. He explains to God that he is lonely:

> . . . In solitude
> What happiness, who can enjoy alone,
> Or all enjoying, what contentment find?

God smiles—always a dangerous sign—and suggests that Adam play with the animals. Adam replies that to live with one's inferiors is 'tedious', and explains that

> . . . of fellowship I speak
> Such as I seek, fit to participate
> All rational delight, wherein the brute
> Cannot be human consort

and compliments God because 'so fitly them in pairs thou hast combined'. God points out that he has always lived alone:

> What thinks't thou then of me, and this my state,
> Seem I to thee sufficiently possessed
> Of happiness, or not? Who am alone
> From all eternity, for none I know
> Second to me or like, equal much less.

Adam, ever resourceful, then argues that he wants children, pointing out to God that there is 'no need that thou/Shouldst propagate, already infinite'. God finally gives in, admitting that he has known all along what Adam wanted ('I, ere thou spakest,/Knew it not good for man to be alone'), and had planned accordingly; he then proceeds to create Eve. The irony, of course, is that God's gift of Eve was eventually to become the instrument of Adam's downfall. It would appear that Milton's God has a somewhat mordant sense of humour as he takes advantage of his higher knowledge. This particular brand of humour has its source not in Milton's sources but in his own personality. When Milton was shown the unflattering portrait of himself which William Marshall had prepared as a frontispiece for Milton's 1645 *Poems*, he composed a short epigram to be placed under the portrait. The Greekless Marshall laboriously transcribed Milton's Greek verses. Milton's learned friends would recognize that the Greek means 'Looking at its original, you would perhaps guess that an ignorant hand had drawn this picture. Since you do not recognize the person, my friends, laugh at this bad portrait by a worthless artist.' The God of Milton's Eden is not unlike his creator.

BLAKE AND THE ARCHAEOLOGY OF EDEN

Paul A. Cantor

> The expulsion from Paradise is in its main significance eternal: Consequently the expulsion from Paradise is final, and life in this world irrevocable, but the eternal nature of the occurrence (or, temporally expressed, the eternal recapitulation of the occurrence) makes it nevertheless possible that not only could we live continuously in Paradise, but that we are continuously there in actual fact, no matter whether we know it here or not.
>
> Franz Kafka[1]

I

Only Kafka could raise the possibility that we are living continuously in paradise and still give a melancholy tone to the suggestion. But Kafka does raise a disturbing point: to be in paradise and not know it is in many respects a worse situation than being barred from paradise. Kafka's skeptical attitude toward the idea of paradise is typical of the approach to traditional myth in twentieth-century writers. But earlier generations were more hopeful about the possibility of recapturing paradise. If one goes back to the first generation of English Romantics, one can see the power of the idea of Eden, the dream that man can once again find the truly happy state he was meant to enjoy:

> . . . Paradise, and groves
> Elysian, Fortunate Fields—like those of old
> Sought in the Atlantic Main—why should they be
> A history only of departed things,
> Or a mere fiction of what never was?
> For the discerning intellect of Man,
> When wedded to this goodly universe
> In love and holy passion, shall find these
> A simple produce of the common day.[2]

In a way, Wordsworth's poetry says the same thing as Kafka's prose—

that we might find paradise in our everyday lives—but the tonality is completely different. When one compares Wordsworth's triumphant proclamation with Kafka's tentative speculations, one has some measure of how attenuated the idea of paradise has become in twentieth-century literature.

Of all the Romantic poets, Blake is the one for whom the idea of paradise was most real. Indeed, with disarming candor, he informs us that he lives there:

> All these things are written in Eden. The artist is an inhabitant of that country; and if every thing goes on as it has begun, the world of generation and vegetation may expect to be opened again to Heaven, through Eden, as it was in the beginning.[3]

Blake claims citizenship in Eden: the possibility which troubles Kafka and which even Wordsworth can only look forward to as a future consummation is for Blake already an accomplished fact. Blake's residence in Eden is somehow bound up in his mind with his role as an artist. But what made it possible for him to feel so confidently in possession of paradise, and above all to locate it at home, in 'England's green and pleasant Land'? One answer is that Blake was led to Eden through his study of mythology, that his window on paradise was opened up by a theory of myths. Although Blake never wrote a systematic treatise on mythology, the evidence from scattered comments in his prose as well as from his mythic poems themselves suggests that in his own way he was a profound student of myth. Many of his notions, in fact, anticipate some of the most prominent modern theories of mythology. By the same token, often when Blake seems to be at his most wildly idiosyncratic in his view of myth, he was only following what he had reason to believe was the best informed scientific opinion of his day. As many scholars have argued, the Romantics were inspired and guided in their efforts at myth-making by the embryonic form of the modern science of comparative mythology, the work of the so-called speculative mythologists of the late seventeenth and the eighteenth centuries.[4] The story of this movement has often been told, but it is worth looking in detail at how Blake was able to obtain his view of Eden.

The original direction of speculative mythology was to establish the primacy of the Bible's account of creation and human history. All myths were viewed as distorted versions of the truths told in the Bible.[5] If every Mediterranean people had its own legend of some kind of primeval flood, the explanation was that they all had heard in one dim way or another of Noah and the Ark. Somehow it seemed to lend authority to the Bible to show that everyone has always believed what it says, if only in corrupted form. But as knowledge of myths accumulated, and especially as information began to pour into Europe from recently explored and colonized territories in the New World and the Far East, it became increasingly difficult to maintain that the Bible is the single source of all myth.[6] The assumption that the biblical revelation was primary, and had simply been diffused throughout the nations of antiquity, could no longer account for the observed facts, especially the presence of stories closely resembling the Bible's in places as ancient as India and as distant as the Americas. As a result, in a momentous reversal, some theorists began to view the biblical stories as myths just like any others, claiming that the Bible presents, not *the* version, but just one version of the divine truth.[7]

Carrying this speculation further, some mythologists attempted to explain the observed similarities among the world's myths by tracing all of them, including the biblical versions, back to a source even more remote in time than the Bible. With no basis in fact for their theories, mythologists were free to hypothesize whatever they wanted about this primal source of myth. One approach was to postulate a highly developed civilization in the distant past of mankind, a civilization somehow uniquely in touch with the divine and thus Edenic. Sometimes identified with the legendary Atlantis, this civilization was thought to have been destroyed in some way, by an earthquake or a flood, leaving a few survivors to carry its culture elsewhere, or perhaps only rumors of its greatness (which would, in particular, explain why the myth of a Flood is so widespread, or why, more generally, the myth of a Fall can be found in many cultures).[8]

England's geographic location, remote from the centers of Mediterranean culture, led some theorists to suppose that it might have preserved aspects of this original civilization in a purer form and for a longer time than had been possible elsewhere in Europe.[9] It was even tempting to suppose that England might be the last surviving fragment of the Atlantean Continent, and hence the starting point for the world-wide diffusion of myth.[10] Mythologists bent on establishing a close link between England and the archetypal and Edenic civilization were greatly aided by the fact that very little was known about indigenous British myth, the memories of which had been largely obliterated by the many invaders who had conquered England. Highly visible, but enigmatic reminders of the religion of the ancient Britons, stark monuments like Stonehenge, fueled speculation about Druid rites and beliefs.[11] But with no way of checking their conclusions, mythologists were basically at liberty in imagining what the original state of mankind had been like.

The speculative mythologists may strike us today as a curious band of crackpots, charlatans and fools, but they had a healthy and liberating effect on Romantic poetry. After centuries of being restricted to the twin orbits of biblical and classical myth, poets suddenly saw a new universe of mythology opening up before their eyes. For one thing, they now seemed to have scientific evidence that the biblical account of creation need not be treated as sacrosanct. More importantly, once one accepted the premise that the biblical versions of myths are just as much distortions as the classical, one acquired a new freedom as a myth-maker. Under the guise of discovering the true version of a myth in all its pristine purity, a poet could basically invent whatever story he liked, or at least pick and choose from elements in traditional myths until he had a version that suited his own aesthetic purposes. Rarely has so much bad science made for so much good poetry, and Blake took full advantage of the artistic opportunity.

II

To see the influence of the speculative mythologists on Blake, the best place to turn is to his *Descriptive Catalogue*, a guide he prepared for an exhibition of his paintings in 1809, probably his most direct attempt to explain his art to the public. In justifying the mythic mode of many of his paintings, Blake states one of the fundamental premises of speculative mythology, and in the process reveals his debt to a famous name in the field:

> The antiquities of every Nation under Heaven, is no less sacred than that of the Jews. They are the same thing as Jacob Bryant and all antiquaries have proved. How other antiquities came to be neglected and disbelieved, while those of the Jews are collected and arranged, is an enquiry, worthy of both the Antiquarian and the Divine. All had originally one language, and one religion, this was the religion of Jesus, the everlasting Gospel (*DC*, 43-44).

As the citation of Jacob Bryant shows, Blake genuinely believed that his views on myth were in harmony with the latest word from experts on the subject.[12] Blake probably became acquainted with Bryant's *A*

New System, or, An Analysis of Ancient Mythology (1774–1776) during his years as a printer's apprentice. He may in fact have worked on some of the illustrative plates for the first edition of the book, which resemble in certain details some of Blake's own illustrations in later years.[13]

Although Bryant was a conservative for his time, still tracing all myths back to biblical originals, his work may have been what first opened Blake's eyes to the variety of mythologies in the world, and thus helped to break him of the habit of according a privileged position to the Bible's account. As this passage from the *Descriptive Catalogue* shows, when Blake professed himself a Christian, he was perfectly capable of separating his version of Christianity from that recorded in the New Testament. In Blake's view, the Bible became the single, canonical text of European religious belief only by an act of usurpation, and he thought it important to study how all other versions of the divine truth had been displaced.[14] By tracing this process, he hoped to recover the one true religion from which all subsequent systems of belief had descended, and thus to get a vision of man's primeval, Edenic state.

According to Blake, our only access to this original state is through the ancient history of Britain, the archetypal civilization for which some speculative mythologists had searched:

> The Britons (say historians) were naked, civilized men, learned, studious, abstruse in thought and contemplation; naked, simple, plain, in their arts and manners; wiser than after-ages. They were overwhelmed by brutal arms all but a small remnant (*DC*, 39-40).[15]

This passage shows one of the reasons why Blake was attracted to the theory of an archetypal civilization. As I have shown elsewhere, the Romantics were inspired in their quest for paradise by the writings of Rousseau, particularly his *Second Discourse*.[16] In his view of man moving from the state of nature to the state of civil society, Rousseau offered a naturalistic version of the Fall of man, a kind of humanization of the mythic account of man's origins given in Milton's *Paradise Lost*. But Rousseau appeared to present man with a difficult choice:

> Thus nature's gentle voice is no longer an infallible guide for us, nor is the independence we have received from her a desirable state. We lost peace and innocence forever before we had appreciated their delights. Unfelt by the stupid men of earliest times, lost to the enlightened men of later times, the happy life of the golden age was always a state foreign to the human race, either because it went unrecognized when humans could

> have enjoyed it or because it had been lost when humans could have known it.[17]

Rousseau seems to present a tragic disjunction in the history of mankind. When man was in the paradise of the state of nature, he was basically indistinguishable from an animal; lacking speech and reason, he was incapable of appreciating his happiness. Now that he has developed his human faculties in civil society, he has lost the happiness he once enjoyed and seems condemned to misery as the price for his growth and education.

The notion Blake found in the speculative mythologists of man's original state as an archetypal civilization gave him a way out of the dilemma posed by Rousseau. It allowed Blake to think of Eden not as primitive but as highly civilized and hence to overcome the antinomy between nature and civilization Rousseau had posited. Blake's ancient Britons have all the advantages of Rousseau's natural man—'naked, simple, plain, in their arts and manners'—but they also have all the advantages of modern civilization. Far from lacking speech and reason, they are 'learned, studious, abstruse in thought and contemplation'. The 'naked, civilized men' of Blake's ancient Britain perfectly embody the Romantic dream of paradise, a state in which man might synthesize the best of nature with the best of civilization; in short, the Romantic ideal of natural man with fully developed faculties. But notice that Blake projects this ideal into a remote past, suggesting that in pursuing the Romantic program of combining nature and civilization, man is only striving to recapture something he once had and lost through a catastrophe. Such is the power of the myth of Eden in Romantic literature.

By bearing in mind the diffusion theories of the speculative mythologists, one can make sense out of some of the weirder statements in the *Descriptive Catalogue*. Consider this pronouncement: 'Adam was a Druid, and Noah; also Abraham was called to succeed the Druidical age' (*DC*, 41). Without going into Blake's ideas about Druidism in detail, one can recognize in this passage his notion that the originals of the figures in the Bible are to be found in British history, or as Blake phrases it: 'All things Begin & End in Albion's Ancient Druid Rocky Shore'.[18] This premise gives Blake a great advantage as a poet, because as he casually reveals: 'The British Antiquities are now in the Artist's hands' (*DC*, 40). We begin to catch a glimpse of the advantages of Blake's strategy as a myth-maker. He claims to have access through his personal visions to the original truths which have hitherto been available only in corrupt form in the mythologies of the world.[19] In his description of two of his paintings, Blake reveals how he benefits as an artist from his understanding of myth:

> The two pictures of Nelson and Pitt are compositions of a mythological cast, similar to those Apotheoses of Persian, Hindoo, and Egyptian Antiquity, which are still preserved on rude monuments, being copies from some stupendous originals now lost or perhaps buried till some happier age. The Artist having been taken in vision into the ancient republics, monarchies, and patriarchates of Asia, has seen those wonderful originals called in the Sacred Scriptures the Cherubim, which were sculptured and painted on walls of Temples, Towers, Cities, Palaces, and erected in the highly cultivated states of Egypt, Moab, Edom, Aram, among the Rivers of Paradise, being the originals from which the Greeks and Hetrurians copied Hercules, Farnese, Venus of Medicis, Apollo Belvedere, and all the grand works of ancient art. They were executed in a very superior style to those justly admired copies, being with their accompaniments terrific and grand in the highest degree. The Artist has endeavoured to emulate the grandeur of those seen in his vision, and to apply it to modern Heroes, on a smaller scale (*DC*, 3-4).

We see here how Blake found his way back to a vision of the 'Rivers of Paradise'. He takes the speculative mythologists' technique of tracing classical legends back to biblical originals and applies it to works of art.[20] As a result, he develops a remarkable theory of art history, that 'all the grand works of ancient art' are merely 'copies from some stupendous originals now lost'.

Blake believed, for example, that the famous Laocoon sculpture group is not an original depiction of a theme from Greek mythology at all, as everyone has supposed. Underneath his engraving of the sculpture, Blake wrote: 'Jehovah & his two Sons Satan & Adam as they were copied from the Cherubim of Solomon's Temple by three Rhodians & applied to Natural Fact or History of Illium'.[21] This one inscription conjures up a whole imaginary history of ancient art. As we ponder it, we must picture a group of artistic novices from Greece wandering through the streets of Jerusalem, in awe of the monumental achievements, then rushing back to their homeland to try to copy down what they had seen as best they could, adapting it to their native mythology.

What could have impelled Blake to such a seemingly fanciful understanding of ancient art? Perhaps Blake was using his mythological theories to help him come to terms with his own place in the history of art.[22] Living toward the end of the great age of English neoclassicism, Blake had been hearing all his life that the artistic achievements of classical antiquity are unsurpassed and unsurpassable. The most Blake could hope for was to copy the great Greek and Roman works, with the understanding that his copies would always be inferior to the originals. But with a little help from speculative mythology, Blake was able to turn the tables on classical antiquity. In Blake's eyes, the works that men like Joshua Reynolds had been holding up as models are themselves only 'justly admired copies'. Hence classical art begins to lose a little of its lustre, its claim to originality or priority. All the Greek artists we have been taught to revere as the wellspring of the Western tradition are now revealed to be mere imitators of an earlier greatness.

At first sight, this theory would seem to leave Blake worse off than before, now hopelessly derivative as an artist, condemned to imitate a band of imitators. But Blake feels that he can bypass his classical intermediaries and get right to the primeval source of artistic inspiration. 'Having been taken in vision into the ancient republics, monarchies, and patriarchates of Asia', Blake 'has seen those wonderful originals' which the classical artists copied. Blake can now 'emulate the grandeur' of the mythical archetypes, applying them to modern subjects, such as Pitt and Nelson. Since his creations are more faithful to the 'stupendous originals', Blake's works of art are less deserving of being denigrated as copies than the works of classical antiquity.

Despite appearances, then, Blake does not have to copy classical art. On the contrary, since Blake has visionary access to the mythic archetypes, the classical artists may be said to be copying him. In Blake's view, his engraving of the Laocoon group is a more original work of art than the classical sculpture he only seems to have used as his model, because Blake has revealed the original meaning of the figures, long concealed by the Rhodians' misinterpretation or misappropriation of what they saw on Solomon's Temple.[23] By a remarkable process of reasoning, Blake manages to establish his artistic priority over the Greeks and Romans who had seemed so firmly established in tradition as his predecessors and superiors. Blake's artistic use of speculative mythology is a special case of the phenomenon Harold Bloom has discussed under the name of poetic misprision.[24] Blake found a way of reinterpreting the works of his predecessors so that they seem, paradoxically, derivative from him. This is how Blake as an artist makes his way back to Eden. Like Adam, Blake finds himself in an enviable position: the first man gets the chance to name things for the first time. Blake no longer has to feel that his art is descended from a long tradition; he can claim to be in touch with the original, archetypal human experience. For an artist, especially a Romantic artist, this situation is truly paradise.

III

The speculative mythologists did more than give Blake the sense that he had access to Eden. They also gave him specific techniques for shaping the new myths he created. Blake evidently arrived at his own versions by comparing several traditional myths which resemble each other and distilling a single archetype from them which he believed embodied their true meaning.[25] In effect, he extrapolated back from the various distorted versions current in the world to the original truth. This technique resembles the approach a mythologist such as Bryant adopted to prove the primacy of the Bible. Bryant combed through the mythologies of the world and put together clusters of similar legends, which he then traced to a single archetype in the Bible.

Bryant saw the figure of Noah, for example, behind a wide range of figures worshipped by the ancients:

> They looked up to him as a person peculiarly favoured by heaven; and honoured him with many titles; each of which had a reference to some particular part of their history. They styled him Prometheus, Deucalion, Atlas, Theuth, Zuth, Xuthus, Inachus, Osiris. When there began to be a tendency towards idolatry; and the adoration of the Sun was introduced by the posterity of Ham; the title of Helius among them was conferred upon him. . . Noah was the original of Zeus, and Dios. He was the planter of the vine, and the inventor of fermented liquors: whence he was denominated Zuth, which signifies ferment; rendered Zeus by the Greeks. He was also Dionusos, interpreted by the Latins Bacchus, but very improperly. Bacchus was Chus, the grandson of Noah; as Ammon may be in general esteemed Ham, so much reverenced by the Egyptians.[26]

This excerpt contains only a fraction of Bryant's list of candidates for Noah-figures in the ancient world. He goes on, for example, to show that by a slight linguistic shift, Noah became the *Nous* of Anaxagoras's philosophy.[27] However amused we may be by Bryant's quaint (and erroneous) etymologies, his procedure evidently made a deep impression on Blake's way of thinking about myth.

Consider, for example, Blake's explication of a central figure in his mythological system:

> The giant Albion, was Patriarch of the Atlantic; he is the Atlas of the Greeks, one of those the Greeks called Titans. The stories of Arthur are the acts of Albion, applied to a Prince of the fifth century, who conquered Europe, and held the Empire of the world in the dark age, which the Romans never again recovered (*DC*, 42-43).

Given Blake's identification of Albion with King Arthur, we can extend the cluster of figures that go to make up the Albion archetype in Blake's mind:

> Arthur was a name for the constellation Arcturus, or Bootes, the Keeper of the North Pole. And all the fables of Arthur and his round table; of the warlike, naked Britons; of Merlin; of Arthur's conquest of the whole world; of his death, or sleep, and promise to return again; of the Druid monuments, or temples; of the pavement of Watling-street; of London stone; of the caverns in Cornwall, Wales, Derbyshire, and Scotland; of the Giants of Ireland and Britain; of the elemental beings, called by us the general name of Faeries. . . Mr B. has in his hands poems of the highest antiquity (*DC*, 40-41).

Without attempting to disentangle all the complexities of these two passages,[28] one can see that Blake followed Bryant's method for analyzing mythic archetypes, rummaging through a wide range of diverse phenomena to come up with a central meaning, correlating astronomical material with legends, urban place names with mythic locales, and history with folklore. By following up some of the leads suggested by Blake's bewildering array of associations with his Albion figure, we can gain access to the core of his mythic system, his view of the Fall of man.

Albion was a giant in Greek mythology, who came to be connected with England, and hence functions on one level as a Spirit of the Isle for Blake.[29] In calling Albion the Patriarch of the Atlantic, Blake may be linking him with the biblical patriarchs or with the legends of Atlantis, or perhaps both at once. The main point seems to be that Albion is a primordial figure, undoubtedly connected with the original Edenic civilization from which all the cultures of the world descend. Blake identifies Albion with the Atlas of Greek mythology, another giant, said to dwell in the islands of the West, and hence appropriately placed in England.[30] Atlas was famous for supporting the heavens on his shoulders, and Blake extends the cosmic dimensions of his giant figure by associating him, through his historical name of Arthur, with 'the constellation Arcturus', thus making him a part of the heavens or the heavens a part of him. Blake's Albion is a kind of cosmic man, like the Adam Kadmon of Kabbalistic myth.[31]

To find the true story of this primeval giant or cosmic man, one has to look at the dim memories of him retained in the various mythologies of the world. What complicates the matter is that for some people, the primeval legends have become confused with historical events. The English, for example, have, according to Blake, taken the legends of Albion and mixed them up with the chronicle accounts of one of their great historical heroes, King Arthur. Thus in order to flesh out the details of Albion's story, Blake can look to the Arthurian cycle of legends. The element of Arthur's story Blake singles out is 'his death, or sleep, and promise to return again'. This particular pattern can be found throughout the mythologies of the world, in all the stories of gods who die in order to be reborn, from Adonis and Osiris to Jesus Christ.

Finding that all people believe in one form or another in the story of a great figure's fall and promised return, Blake concluded that this was the truly archetypal myth. It is, of course, adumbrated in the story of the Fall of Adam and Eve in Genesis. Lurking behind all the conflicting mythologies of the world is the central story of the fall of a primordial being, the scattering of his elements to form the world as we know it,[32] and the hope of his eventually being gathered back together to restore the original unity. Blake gave a capsule statement of this myth in terms of Arthur's story in describing his painting 'The Ancient Britons':

> In the last Battle of King Arthur only Three Britons escaped, these were the Strongest Man, the Beautifullest Man, and the Ugliest Man; these three marched together through the field unsubdued, as Gods, and the Sun of Britain set, but shall arise again with tenfold splendour when Arthur shall awake from sleep, and resume his dominion over earth and ocean (*DC*, 39).

Blake goes on to explain the meaning of this obviously allegorical painting:

> The Strong man represents the human sublime. The Beautiful man represents the human pathetic, which was in the wars of Eden divided into male and female. The Ugly man represents the human reason. They were originally one man, who was fourfold; he was self-divided, and his real humanity slain on the stems of generation, and the form of the fourth was like the Son of God. How he became divided is a subject of great

> sublimity and pathos. The Artist has written it under inspiration, and will, if God please, publish it; it is voluminous, and contains the ancient history of Britain, and the world of Satan and Adam (*DC*, 41-42).

We see here once again how the world of Eden and the world of England blend together in Blake's mind. He is probably referring to his major prophecies in this passage, and one would have to study these poems carefully to understand it fully. But its overall meaning is easy to grasp, and in fact this passage provides perhaps the clearest statement Blake ever gave of the basic direction of his myth. Blake's prophetic works deal with the breaking up of a primordial unity into multiplicity, together with the hope of restoring man to his original Edenic wholeness.

As the *Descriptive Catalogue* indicates, Blake's myths, however cosmologically expressed, deal with something which happens within man himself. The basic problem for Blake is that man is self-divided. His faculties once worked in harmony, but now they are at war with one another. In particular, the human reason has become divided from the human sublime and the human pathetic, or, to put it even more simply, reason and the passions no longer function together. But this is precisely Rousseau's characterization of what has happened to man since leaving the state of nature for the state of civil society.[33] Blake used his knowledge of speculative mythology to come up with a version of the Fall of man which highlighted his view of what is wrong with our current state. For Blake, if we are to find our way back to Eden and repossess paradise, we must learn to overcome the divisions we have introduced into our own psyches. Attracted as he was to the more extreme theories of speculative mythology, Blake may at times appear to be an antiquarian drudge or an occult fanatic, interested in myth for myth's sake. But in fact Blake's vision of Eden was rooted in a new conception of human nature, one which had important ethical consequences. The mythological theories of men such as Bryant liberated Blake's imagination to formulate a new conception of paradise, one which united nature and civilization and one which Blake could present as recoverable for modern man. The work of the speculative mythologists may well seem to be one of those chapters of intellectual history which are justly forgotten, but as Blake's case shows, speculative mythology did leave a significant legacy, as it made its mark on the Romantic search for the traces of our lost paradise. Indeed the theories of mythology Blake inherited made Eden come alive for him in a way few artists have ever experienced.

Notes

1. *Parables and Paradoxes* (trans. W. and E. Muir; New York: Schocken Books, 1961), p. 29.

2. William Wordsworth, Preface to *The Excursion* (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1977), ll. 47-55.

3. *Descriptive Catalogue*, p. 41. All quotations from Blake are taken from D.V. Erdman and H. Bloom (eds.), *The Complete Poetry and Prose of William Blake* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1982). I cite by Blake's original plate or page numbers, using *DC* as an abbreviation for *Descriptive Catalogue.*

4. The pioneer work on the influence of the speculative mythologists on Romantic poetry, and still the most comprehensive treatment of the subject, is E.B. Hungerford, *Shores of Darkness* (repr. Cleveland: Meridian, 1963 [1941]), which has a whole chapter devoted to Blake (pp. 35-61). A selection of the writings of the speculative mythologists is available in B. Feldman and R.D. Richardson (eds.), *The Rise of Modern Mythology, 1680–1860* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1972). For a survey of the problem of myth in eighteenth-century thought, see F. Manuel, *The Eighteenth Century Confronts the Gods* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1959). For further discussion of the impact of speculative mythology on literature, see H.B. Franklin, *The Wake of the Gods: Melville's Mythology* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1963), pp. 1-9, and A.J. Kuhn, 'English Deism and the Development of Romantic Mythological Syncretism', *Proceedings of the Modern Language Association* 71 (1956), pp. 1094-1116. For specific applications to Blake, see R. Todd, 'William Blake and the Eighteenth Century Mythologists', in *Tracks in the Snow* (London: Grey Walls, 1946), pp. 29-60.

5. See Manuel, *Eighteenth Century*, pp. 112-13.

6. See Kuhn, 'English Deism', p. 1096; Feldman and Richardson, *Modern Mythology*, pp. xxi-xxii; and Northrop Frye, *Fearful Symmetry* (repr. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1969 [1947]), p. 173.

7. See Manuel, *Eighteenth Century*, p. 114, and Kuhn, 'English Deism', pp. 1095, 1105-1107, who credits Deism with prompting this reassessment.

8. See Hungerford, *Shores*, pp. 23-28.

9. See E. Davies, *Celtic Researches* (London: J. Booth, 1804), pp. 119-21.

10. This was the theory of a man named Francis Wilford. See Hungerford, *Shores*, pp. 29-33; and Todd, 'William Blake', pp. 34-35.

11. See especially W. Stukeley, *Stonehenge, a Temple restor'd to the British Druids* (1740), excerpts of which appear in Feldman and Richardson, *Modern Mythology*, pp. 126-29. See also Davies, *Celtic Researches*, pp. 146-47; Kuhn, 'English Deism', pp. 1111-15; and Frye, *Fearful Symmetry*, p. 174.

12. On Bryant, see Hungerford, *Shores*, pp. 20-22 and Feldman and Richardson, *Modern Mythology*, pp. 241-48.

13. See Todd, 'William Blake', pp. 37-38; Feldman and Richardson, *Modern Mythology*, p. 241; K. Raine, *William Blake* (New York: Praeger, 1971), pp. 13-

15; and J. Beer, *Blake's Visionary Universe* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1969), pp. 15-16, 23.

14. On this point, see Blake's *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell*, pls. 12-13.

15. Cf. Stukeley (Feldman and Richardson, *Modern Mythology*, pp. 127-28): 'our predecessors, the Druids of Britain. . . advanc'd their inquiries, under all disadvantages, to such heights, as should make our moderns asham'd, to wink in the sun-shine of learning and religion'. See also Davies, *Celtic Researches*, pp. 7-8.

16. See my *Creature and Creator: Myth-making and English Romanticism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984), esp. pp. 1-25.

17. *The Geneva Manuscript*, Book I, chapter 2, in Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *On the Social Contract* (trans. J.R. Masters; New York: St Martin's, 1978), pp. 158-59.

18. *Jerusalem*, pl. 27. See also Todd, 'William Blake', pp. 46-56; Frye, *Fearful Symmetry*, p. 174; Beer, *Visionary*, pp. 17-23; S.F. Damon, *A Blake Dictionary* (repr. New York: E.P. Dutton, 1971 [1965]), pp. 108-10; and P.F. Fisher, 'Blake and the Druids', *Journal of English and Germanic Philology* 58 (1959), pp. 589-612.

19. In a letter dated May 8, 1830, Robert Southey wrote that after meeting with a Welsh antiquarian, 'Blake and his wife were persuaded that his dreams were old patriarchal truths, long forgotten, and now re-revealed'. See E. Dowden (ed.), *The Correspondence of Robert Southey with Caroline Bowles* (London: Longmans, Green, 1881), p. 194.

20. Todd finds a precedent for Blake's approach in the writings of Sir William Chambers, 'who denied that the Greeks have done anything which the Egyptians had not done before them' ('William Blake', pp. 33, 42).

21. Erdman and Bloom, *Poetry and Prose*, p. 270. See Todd, 'William Blake', pp. 42-44 and Damon, *Dictionary*, p. 234.

22. See Beer, *Visionary*, pp. 45-50.

23. Todd ('William Blake', pp. 43-44) points out that Blake later attempted a freer rendering of the Laocoon group, in which he goes further in correcting the Rhodians by adding clothing to the figures.

24. See H. Bloom, *A Map of Misreading* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1975), especially the discussion of Milton, pp. 125-43.

25. See Feldman and Richardson, *Modern Mythology*, p. 290.

26. *A New System*, II (London: T. Payne, 1775), pp. 198-99. Reprinted in L.M. Trawick (ed.), *Backgrounds of Romanticism* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1967), pp. 180-81.

27. Bryant, II, pp. 199-200 (*Backgrounds*, p. 181).

28. For a detailed explication, see Hungerford, *Shores*, pp. 45-59.

29. See Hungerford, *Shores*, p. 45 and Damon, *Dictionary*, p. 9.

30. Cf. Davies, *Celtic Researches*, p. 194.

31. See M.O. Percival, *William Blake's Circle of Destiny* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1938), pp. 13-17.

32. Blake could have found this notion particularly well developed in Norse mythology, in the stories of the primeval giant Ymir, out of whose dead body the

gods framed the world. Blake probably learned what he knew of Norse mythology from the work of Paul Henri Mallet, translated into English by Thomas Percy in 1770 under the title *Northern Antiquities*. For Mallet's account of Ymir, see Feldman and Richardson, *Modern Mythology*, pp. 257-58.

33. See *Creature and Creator*, pp. 10-13, 33-34.

SIN, SAGA AND GENDER: THE FALL AND ORIGINAL SIN IN MODERN THEOLOGY

Richard Roberts

Introduction

The doctrines of the Fall and original sin expose in a peculiarly acute way some of the points of greatest historical strength, and contemporary vulnerability in the theologies of the Western Latin tradition, both Catholic and Protestant. The doctrine of the Fall as the foundational explication of the events concerned with a single, representative individual understood as the crowning point of the whole scheme of creation has been a *leitmotif* of orthodox Protestantism. Similarly, traditional Catholicism asserts a high doctrine of original sin as the root of its stability: the whole sacramental system can be understood as successive stages of ministry to fallen human nature. Thus the interpretation of the Genesis narratives as history, and their exploitation as the scriptural justification of an account of human nature, respectively, impose a heavy burden upon the doctrines of the Fall and original sin once these entered the modern era, with its historicist presuppositions and progressive differentiation of the human sciences.[1]

The survival in the modern period (*Neuzeit*) of the doctrines of the Fall and original sin is not, therefore, a matter so much of the reduction, retreat, or persistence as 'loci' within the microcosm of systematic theology as such, but a function of the global cultural macrocosm, understood as the re-interpretation of the whole enterprise of modernity and postmodernity. There are thus two distinct approaches that might be taken up at this juncture. The first is to examine the internal readjustments within the theological tradition that have served to conserve and sustain the doctrines of the Fall and original sin in the post-Enlightenment era. The second would be to trace out the successive migrations of doctrine into their secularized correlates (through fascinating mutual processes of displacement) so as to explore through interdisciplinary means (sociological, psychological, phenomenological, philosophical, historical, and so on) the residues of theological conceptions to be found in the human sciences.[2] Of course, any positive systematic theology really worthy of contemporary note would have to take account of both (interconnected) processes, and this step into mutuality constitutes one interpretation of the present day theological task *per se*, but this lies beyond the immediate concerns of the present paper.

Given the relative intellectual isolation of Roman Catholic theology and its strategic resistance to modernity, maintained with some success until the *aggorniomento* of Vatican II, it is apparent that the most bold doctrinal experimentation has taken place in Protestant thought, that is, particularly in nineteenth-century and twentieth-century German liberal theology, and then later in Barthian neo-orthodoxy. Post-war developments in liberation and feminist theology depart from this continuous, albeit internally diverse, dogmatic tradition.

In order to clarify the situation I proceed in the following way. First, I shall outline the subsumption of 'sin' into the framework of the post-Reformation and post-Enlightenment 'turn to the subject', in a theology located primarily in the analysis of the nature of faith. Secondly, emerging critically against this consensus, I shall examine in rather more detail the startling rediscovery of the doctrine of original sin in the epochal early work of Karl Barth in the two *Römerbriefe* (1919;[3] 1922[4]) and briefly relate this to the diverging theologies of his early collaborators in the journal *Zwischen den Zeiten* and the 'dialectical theology' of the period 1922–1934, and to other developments. Thirdly, I then outline Barth's understanding of the Fall in the great *Church Dogmatics*.[5] Barth's progressive isolation and his erection of the intensely formal, biblicist theology both inspires and repels; against it the major alternatives have to be judged. Fourthly, in conclusion, I shall set out some of the consequences that have flowed (at least in part) from this formidable, but problematic repristination of systematic theology. In particular, it is remarkable that many subsequent systematic theologians of importance have found themselves obliged to revert, in different ways, to Hegelian ways of thinking if they are to retain a conceptual grasp both upon the peculiar object of theology and upon the human condition as such. It is thus within this re-Hegelianization of theology that the doctrine of the Fall and original sin, in as much as they persist, have been conceived. This staged account is, as I have stressed, but a limited way of assessing the situation, a partial 'archaeology' of the doctrines in the modern period and a first step. The pursuit of theology proper (in this instance Christian) should be in terms of what I have designated as the second mode of interface; at this juncture the responsible appropriation of the methods and insights of *religious studies* and its tense interplay of disciplines become a condition of the pursuit of truth and the retention of a grasp upon reality within *theology* rightly understood.[6]

1. *The Fall and Original Sin in the Transformations of Tradition*

The complexity of the background to efforts at creating a scriptural foundation for a doctrine of original sin is well documented,[7] and the initial evolution of the conception of sin in relation to baptism and over against Gnosticism did not receive full formal development until Augustine's radical systemization grounded in the term *peccatum originale*. By nature, man in his concupiscence turns from God, bearing (if unbaptised) the inherent stain of Adam's sin transmitted through the *libido* of parental love. Out of the *massa damnata* constituted by Adam's sin are drawn those predestined for salvation.[8] The intricacies of the then evolving conceptions of the nature of salvation were worked out and formalized during the Middle Ages from Anselm of Canterbury onwards. The Reformation crisis, expressed theologically in the resuscitation of a Pauline and Augustinian doctrine of grace, and the Counter-Reformation re-consolidation, culminating in the formal definitions of Catholic teaching on justification at the Council of Trent, polarized the Western Latin tradition. The Fall and the doctrines of original sin remained central (indeed their importance was reinforced in both traditions) but with different emphases related to the contrasting understandings of belief, ecclesiology and institutional power adopted by both sides. The forensic, as opposed to the anthropological nature of the Tridentine definition is made clear in Karl Rahner's assessment:

> The Council of Trent defined (with the Reformers) a real original sin in all (except Mary), which is caused by Adam's sin, is really effaced by justification and (against the Reformers) does *not* consist in concupiscence, since this persists in the justified, but in the lack of original righteousness (justice) and holiness, which the Council regarded as constituted by the grace of justification as interior and habitual.[9]

Whereas the Tridentine Catholic tradition retained a high and integrated doctrine of the Church as the mediatrix of forensic justification, the contrasting individualistic anthropological determinant in the theologies and practices of the Reformation and its conception of original sin had profound long-term consequences. The subsequent history of the Reformed and Lutheran theologies, their breakdown into Protestant orthodox scholastic dogmatics and subjectivist Pietism, need not concern us. The implicit weaknesses of a theology grounded in the subjectivity of the believer was eventually exposed by the progressive immanent critique of the German Enlightenment, enunciated in philosophical terms by the philosopher Kant, and then polemically by Fichte in the *Atheismusstreit*. The true onset of the turn to the subject in an 'enlightened' modernity came about in the aftermath of Kant's great *Critique of Pure Reason* (1781–87). Kant, the 'philosopher of Protestantism', set out positive limits to the pretensions of reason and to the knowable so as to preclude the possibility of speculative theology. Once more after Hegel's death in 1831, controversy broke out between so-called right- and left-wing Hegelians over the disputed religious and theological bias in the work of the master which culminated in the lectures on revelation given by the elderly Schelling in 1841–42.[10] The left-wing Hegelians, above all Ludwig Feuerbach, but also Max Stirner, Bruno Bauer and Karl Marx, all drove home in different but closely related ways the same basic message that theology is anthropology. The doctrine of original sin thus began its long displacement and transmigration in a modernity hostile to theology, yet a modernity which through its 'dialectic of Enlightenment' has proved incapable of coming to terms with historical human evil and its own intellectual *aporia*.[11]

The repeated attempts in German Protestantism to re-establish Christian theology on new foundations which respected the epistemological and ontological limitations inherited from Kant, which were undertaken, for example, by Schleiermacher, Ritschl, and their successors, suffered from an intractable problem. Renewed religious epistemologies could be grounded in hypostatized aspects of subjectivity (construed as the sense of absolute dependence or 'value', for example)[12] but the derivation of ontological structure from such a basis proved to be problematic. In summary, as regards the doctrines of the Fall and original sin the following situation came about. On the one hand, it proved possible to reconstrue the doctrines of the Fall and original sin in terms of an endemic resistance to the 'knowledge of God' as it was represented in the modes adopted within the reconstructionist theologies[13] of the nineteenth century. In this way, the anthropological emphasis of the Augustinian concept of sin as *concupiscentia* was retained, albeit in displaced form. On the other hand, the gradual abandonment of a belief in the historicity of the Adamic narratives in Genesis distanced the tradition from the scriptural justifications of the doctrine.

The later nineteenth-century development (stagnation might be more apposite) of German liberal theology and its accommodation to society as *Kulturprotestantismus* is a story frequently told. Despite Kant's surprising endorsement of the 'radical evil' within man (against the Enlightenment optimism of many of his contemporaries), it was the ideology of optimistic, progressive affirmation that triumphed within this theological tradition. So much the greater was the disillusionment experienced in the aftermath of the First World War: the pact between Church and State (practised by the Protestants, emulated by Catholics) was exploded by defeat and the Armistice. It was into this social and cultural chaos that Karl Barth projected his immense energy and brought about virtually single-handed a new school of German Protestant theology. With this, he re-asserted a conception of original sin and, in his later theology, a repristination of the doctrine of the Fall.

2. *Barth's Römerbrief and the Dialectical Recovery of the Doctrine of Original Sin*

In 1919, the first edition of Karl Barth's *Römerbrief* was published by an obscure press in German Switzerland. The pre-history of this text is not of importance to our immediate aims; it is sufficient to note that Barth suddenly sprang to national prominence in Germany at the Tambach Conference (September, 1919) at which he lectured on the subject of the Christian in society and managed to capture and answer the sense of desperation and need. Following this, the second edition of the *Römerbrief* was bought out by a Munich publisher.[14] Barth, meanwhile, stung by criticism of his 'commentary', had rewritten the whole text in furious haste. The relationship of the two texts provides, in my view, one of the most interesting cases of intertextuality in the literature of twentieth-century thought.

The second edition of the *Römerbrief* (1922) contains what amounts to a Reformed *via negativa* of extreme ferocity: 'to us God is, and remains, unknown; we are, and remain, homeless in this world; sinners we are and sinners we remain'.[15] Gone was the pre-war optimism expressed so eloquently by Adolf Harnack at the turn of the century, when man stood, as it were, on the side of the Eternal. It was, Barth maintained, unhistorical to overlook the human incapacity upon which human history pronounces its own judgment. Consequently, Barth asked:

> If all the great outstanding figures in history, whose judgments are worthy of serious consideration, if all the prophets, Psalmists, philosophers, Fathers of the Church, Reformers, poets, artists, were asked their opinion, would one of them asset that men were good or even capable of good? Is the doctrine of original sin merely one doctrine among many? Is it not rather, according to its fundamental meaning (see, however, v. 12) THE Doctrine which emerges from all honest study of history? Is it not the doctrine which, in the last resort, underlies the whole teaching of history? Is it possible for us to adopt a 'different point of view' from that of the Bible, Augustine, and the Reformers? What then does history teach about the things which men do or not do?
>
> Does it teach that some men, at least, are like God? No, but that—There is none righteous, no, not one.
>
> Does it teach that men possess a deep perception of the nature of things? or that they have experienced the essence of life? No, but that—There is none that understandeth.
>
> Doe it provide a moving picture of quiet piety or of fiery search after God? Do the great witnesses to the truth furnish a splendid picture, for example of 'Prayer'? No:—There is none that seeketh after God.
>
> Can it describe this or that individual and his actions as natural, healthy, genuine, original, right-minded, ideal, full of character, affectionate, attractive, intelligent, forceful, ingenious, of sterling worth? No:—They have all turned aside, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not so much as one.
>
> Can it not unearth, perhaps, some secular or spiritual human characteristics more beautiful even than those—whether in the inner realm of intelligence or in the outer realm of conduct—conscious or unconscious—active or passive—theoretical or practical? No:—Their throat is an open sepulchre; With their tongues they have used deceit: the poison of asps is under their lips: Whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness. And in the final judgment upon the thoughts and words of men—Their feet are swift to shed blood; Destruction and misery are in their ways; And the way of peace have they not known. This is the final judgment upon the deeds and works of men.[16]

These ramified questions are a distinctive feature of the rhetorical performance involved in Barth's 'commentary'[17] upon the text of Romans 3, and they have a peculiar paradoxical quality: they encipher a strategy in which Barth both distances himself from, and identifies with, the doctrine of original sin. Barth takes up tradition in order to transmute, rather than merely to reiterate it. If this passage is compared with its corresponding forerunner in the first edition of 1919, then the dialectical tension is made even clearer. In the first *Römerbrief*, two historical orders are juxtaposed, that is, the 'new real history opened up in Christ and the near completed old, so-called history',[18] which encounter in a relation of transvaluation and fulfilment, for, as Barth maintains, it is not 'as regards the coming world a matter of emptying but rather of a fulfilment of the world that passes away'.[19] The pointed allusion to Nietzsche's 'transvaluation of all values' (*Umwertung aller Werte*) indicates that Barth's dialectic in the first *Römerbrief* is relatively benign and static, despite the use of geometric terminology:

> The power of God that has been revealed does not open a new historical time *after* and *behind* the other, but brings about the appearance and realisation of the divine possibility of all periods.[20]

In the second edition of *Römerbrief* the theological dialectic is carried into radical, even unmitigated contradiction, for 'no road to the eternal meaning of the created world has ever existed, save the road of negation'.[21] This 'lesson of history' is informed by extreme eschatologization out of which springs a theologically conditioned negative dialectic. The rhetorical appeal to the *loci* or commonplaces of 'original sin' is part of Barth's strategic encipherment of dialectic in the terminology of tradition. The appeal to doctrinal conceptions is, however, an objective subordinate to the fundamental aim that emerges with greater extremity in the second edition of *The Epistle to the Romans.* Whereas the dialectic of *Römerbrief I* bears comparison with the intellectual strategies of the earlier critical theorists (T.W. Adorno, Walter Benjamin, Ernst Bloch and, in a more qualified way, Georgy Lukacs) in that all set up a juxtaposition of 'historical' orders of fetishised reality as opposed to non-fetishised latency, the eschatological reworking of the doctrine of justification in *Römerbrief II* set its dialectic apart: it is, as it were, irrevocably *theological*, and patently not a philosophical or literary strategy that employs theological language in forms of instrumental refunctioning. Men cannot, Barth asserts,

> by means of *human logic* (iii, 5) proceed to reverse the truth that God is God, or escape from the disturbance and tension, the insecurity and questionableness, of the position in which God has placed them.[22]

The condition of original sin must wholly and exclusively dictate the terms upon which faith has to be understood, and it is the consistency and extremity of this position which was later to bring Barth into sharp conflict with Emil Brunner:[23]

> Genuine faith is a void, an obeisance before that which we can never be, or do, or possess; it is devotion to Him who can never become the world or man, save in the dissolution and redemption and resurrection of everything which we here and now call world and man.[24]

For Barth, 'original sin' thus describes that condition of utter human incapacity that is the precondition of the realization of an exclusively God-given knowledge of God. In terms of ambiguous rupture with, and retention of, the past, Barth's *Römerbrief* does for twentieth-century theology what Hegel's *Phenomenology of Mind* (1807) did for the philosophy of the nineteenth. The doctrine of original sin has been recovered, and then refunctioned[25] as a principle of epistemological limitation, the core of a renewed *via negativa*; yet Barth's aim was not, as with his contemporaries, to relativize and distance an unacceptable social order as such, but to release his God from the captivity of that order. Needless to say not only was the distinction (drawn in, say, more traditional Catholic moral theology) between 'original sin' and 'sin' effectively elided, but also Barth's exegesis seemed to play havoc with received interpretations of the Pauline texts. Barth subsumed both into a dialectic with universal epistemological and ontological implications into which the doctrine of justification, consistent eschatology and extreme transcendentalism entered into stark and paradoxical synthesis.

The problematic nature of this synthesis became apparent to Barth and his collaborators in the dialectical theology movement. Again, for each (for example, Tillich, Bultmann, Brunner, Gogarten), the doctrine of original sin is reinterpreted (or quietly dropped) in accordance with exigencies set by developing theological considerations of each writer. It was Dietrich Bonhoeffer who, along with Brunner, was to give most serious consideration to the doctrines of the Fall and original sin in the aftermath of dialectical theology and the extreme situation of the Third Reich and the German Church struggle.[26]

Barth, above all, remained wholly in tune with his own ambitions and after a decade (1922–32) of searching,[27] and one false start in the *Christliche Dogmatik* of 1927, set about the construction of a colossal systematic theology, the *Kirchliche Dogmatik* (1931ff.). The second

Römerbrief remains a document crucial to the comprehension of all the strategies evolved by Barth's contemporary associates. As regards Barth himself, his early dialectic failed above all to provide an adequate account of the historical scheme and the ontology of the created order to which revelation addressed itself. The major thrust of the *Church Dogmatics* is concerned with the re-historicization (over against German idealism and Barth's own early dialectic) of the events of revelation in terms of re-engaging with simple contingency.

A full account of the various strategies that Barth employed in successive volumes of the *Church Dogmatics* lies outside our immediate concern. In Volumes I and II the procedure is essentially ontological, building upon the *assumptio gratia* model provided by a Christology drawn primarily from John of Damascus as mediated through Protestant orthodoxy: the union of the natures, *vere Deus*, *vere homo*, provides the clue to the generation and integration of all categories of reality in terms of christological consequence. In Volume III, devoted to the doctrine of creation, Barth began to move in a more explicitly historical direction distinguishing myth, saga and legend, but using something akin to an informal phenomenological method in his development of a theological anthropology. This characterization of the 'saga' of creation history out of which emerges a christologically informed anthropology reflects, on the one hand, the controversy of the dialectical theology period (during which the notion of a theological *Urgeschichte* emerged); but on the other it points forward to the fourth section of Volume IV of the *Church Dogmatics* which is conceived in terms of 'history'. It is here that one of the major impulses behind the development of 'narrative theology' is to be found; here 'history' is understood in the following terms, as the bedrock upon which the theologian's spade turns:

> The atonement is history. To know it, we must know it as such. To think of it as such, to speak of it, we must tell it as history. To try to grasp it as a supra-historical or non-historical truth is not to grasp it at all. It is indeed truth, but truth actualised in a history and revealed in this history as such—revealed, therefore, as history.[28]

Here Barth's 'transcendental deduction' of all categories from the *Novum* of revelation attains fulfilment. In conformity with the 'thought-form' (*Denkform*) of German idealism,[29] a schema interpreted in terms of christological priority, sinful contingency is derived *a posteriori* from the *a priori* of Jesus Christ. The quasi-

Hegelian tone becomes explicit with the re-historicization of the two-natures ontology that takes place in Volume IV of the *Church Dogmatics* where the 'very God is shown in this way into the far country (*Fremde*) in which the Lord (*Herr*) became a servant (*Knecht*)'.[30] This Hegelian nuance is not incidental but fundamental in a scheme in which both the Fall and original sin emerge as moments in the 'very special history' (*höchst besondere Geschichte*) of the Word. The general claim that man is a sinner is carried back to its transcendental presupposition consequential upon the particularity of the Word,

> Access to the knowledge that he is a sinner is lacking to man because he is a sinner. We are presupposing agreement on this point. All serious theology has tried to win its knowledge of sin from the Word of God and base it on that Word.[31]

Thus, in paragraph 60 of the *Church Dogmatics*,[32] Barth reinstates *in extenso* much of the former discussion of the fallen nature of man in the tradition. Such is Barth's confidence that he can assimilate the Genesis narrative into his scheme without embarrassment:

> Who could see and attest the coming into being of heaven and earth and especially the coming into being of Adam and his corresponding individual existence? It is not history but only saga which can tell us that he came into being in this way—the first man. We miss the unprecedented and incomparable thing which the Genesis passages tell of the coming into being and existence of Adam if we try to read and understand it as history, relating it either favourably or unfavourably to scientific palaeontology, or to what we now know with some historical certainty concerning the oldest and most primitive forms of human life. The saga as a form of historical narration is a genre apart. And within this genre biblical saga is a special instance which cannot be compared with others but has to be seen and understood in and for itself. Saga in general is the form which, using intuition and imagination, has to take up historical narration at the point where events are no longer susceptible as such of historical proof, and the special instance of biblical saga is that in which intuition and imagination are used but in order to give prophetic witness to what has taken place by virtue of the Word of God in the (historical or pre-historical) sphere where there can be no historical proof. It was in this sphere of biblical saga that Adam came into being and existed. And it was in this sphere—again by virtue of the prophetically attested Word and judgment of God—that there took place the fall, the fall of the first man. The biblical saga tells us that world-history began with the pride and fall of man.[33]

The introduction of the term 'saga' (*Sage*) as 'genre' allows Barth to retain the Genesis narratives of the Fall without remaining dependent upon a defence of their historicity. Yet at the same time he promotes an account of the exclusivity of the Word of God as a kind of source of the Adamic saga, in that this directly implies a foreclosure of utopian or transcendent alternatives, and it is this which gives weight to interpretations of Barth's theology that see in it totalitarian tendencies. Faith in atonement carries with it an ascesis so radical as to verge upon *reductio ad absurdum*: the reader is presented with an oversimplified choice, an unacceptable either/or. It is the presentation of such dilemmas that tend to reinforce the parallel between the role of Barth's thought in twentieth-century theology and German idealism in the German philosophy of the nineteenth. Thus the later Barth and the late Schelling (who lectured in Berlin in 1841–42 to counter the atheism of the left-wing Hegelians) both produced exalted narrative discourse seemingly at one remove from the normal sphere of history and society. Barth's influence upon the generation who grew through their intellectual adolescence in the late 1950s and early 1960s was such that given the choice of remaining within the self-understanding implied by the discourse, or stepping right outside it into thoroughgoing atheistic emancipation, many chose the latter course. This was a similar choice which faced the auditors of the elderly Schelling's lectures on the *Philosophy of Revelation*:

> We are known by God in Adam, i.e., as those who are subject to the law revealed in him. In him, therefore, the whole history of man. Adam is not a fate which God has suspended over us. Adam is the truth concerning us as it is known to God and told to us. The relationship between him and us, and us and him, is not, therefore, one which is pragmatically grounded in terms of a transmission between him and us. It is God who establishes it. It is the Word of God which gives this name and title to mankind and the history of man. It is God's Word which fuses all men into unity with this man as *primus inter pares*. It is the Word of God which condemns at once his disobedience and therefore condemns our disobedience. It is the Word of God which forbids us to dream of any golden age in the past or any real progress within Adamic mankind and history or any future stage of historical perfection, or indeed to put our hope in anything other than the atonement which has taken place in Jesus Christ.[34]

Barth's theology remains of central importance, yet it is deeply problematic; it remains a massive obstacle, through, rather than round which it is necessary for the Anglo-Saxon (in particular the English) tradition to proceed. Barth's conceptions of the Fall and of original sin are consistent with, and indeed reinforce, the main stages in, and tendencies of, his work.

3. *The Fall and Original Sin: the Evolution of Alternative Strategies*

Barth's relationship with his contemporaries changed after his return to Switzerland in 1935; he devoted himself with obsessive zeal to the completion of the *Church Dogmatics* and nearly all interaction with others (whether living or dead) was subordinated to the central task of his life. Having, as it were, dug the foundations of a 'safe stronghold of transcendence' (the notorious *Feste Burg der Transzendenz* parodied by Ernst Bloch), Barth continued to elaborate its architectonic until his energies finally gave out shortly before his death in 1968. Barth's early associates and contemporaries, Bultmann, Tillich, Brunner and Gogarten, all developed out of the dialectical phase through their own attempts to relaunch theology in the face of the inheritance of Kant, Hegel and Troeltsch, besides the influence of their erstwhile colleague. None of them proposed the reinstatement of the traditional conceptuality of the doctrines of the Fall and original sin with the autonomous zeal characteristic of Barth. All of them were more conscious of the impinging pressure of historicism, a secularized modernity, and a critical *Zeitgeist* inimical to that mode of theological freedom that Barth was prepared to purchase at a price which none of them (save, perhaps, Tillich) were prepared to pay. All regarded the demands of modernity as sufficiently pressing to require a response, a response which took the form of transmuting theological categories or effecting compromise.

The generation of Barth's pupils and their disciples and more recent developments have been characterized by a retreat from extensive systemization on his scale. Moltmann, Jungel and Pannenberg, for example, have all exploited a more oblique approach to the restatement of the tradition. Thus, all three, by their appropriations of Hegel and Bloch's Marxism, hermeneutics, and by a Hegelian historical scheme augmented by extensive work in the natural and human sciences, respectively, have recognized (as Barth seemingly refused to do) the necessity of grounding theological method in an account of sociocultural reality. All passed, as it were, through a Barthian phase in their development, but then back into the wider tradition; none has, however, produced a satisfactory theological anthropology and anything more than peripheral references to the doctrines of the Fall and to original sin.

The latter now persist at more than one remove from the centre of theological attention. It is difficult to see how they could be reinstated: their problematic status is a function of a more general failure to realize within contemporary Western European culture the power of Christian myth and symbol. Nevertheless, this is not to say that the saga of the Fall and original sin is an item finally expunged from the theological agenda.

Despite a preoccupation with the doctrine of sin in the so-called biblical theology (in both Britain and North America) and the 'Christian realism' associated with the name of Reinhold Niebuhr, the conception of sin as such has undergone displacement and transformation in ways associated with profound changes in social attitudes, not least in the United States and Britain. The expressivist revolution of the 1960s and the subsequent resurgence of individualism in the Reagan–Thatcher era has paradoxically been characterized by conflicting tendencies. On the one hand, the gospel of self-construction and the gratification of impulse has dismissed the doctrine of original sin as an anachronism; on the other hand, however, the emergent New Right has constantly referred back to the intrinsic and residual evil in human nature and with this to the assumed futility of all so-called collectivist solutions to the task of human self-fulfilment. This conflict lies unresolved at the heart of contemporary culture and society.

On the theological level over the same period an acute fissiparousness has been evident; global theological systems have given way to sector theologies, the equivalent of pressure-group politics. In this new situation, the doctrine of original sin (albeit without a dated historical Fall) has undergone a displacement. In a way similar to the great scapegoating of the bourgeoisie and the concomitant endowment of the proletariat with quasi-salvific (certainly messianic) potency in Marxism, so the two major creative thrusts of recent Christian theology, the theology of liberation and feminist theology, have particularized the doctrine of original sin and formulated partial and binary conceptions of the human condition.[35] The theology of liberation (now in a critical condition following the world crisis of socialism) has recast the conception of original sin in terms of 'structural sin'. The political colouring of this theology has tended to de-individualize theological concepts and recast them quasi-politically in ways that exclude the ascription of sin in terms of the individual. Feminist theology is, however, altogether more serious in its revisionary implications, and in some of its strands the doctrine of original sin has undergone a reversal leading in some cases to what amounts to a dualism of good and evil built around gender difference. The writings of, for example, Mary Daly, comprise the invention of a discourse which inverts the ancestral identifications of women, sin and evil, and presents a total alternative, even a redefining of being itself through vibrant and perverse etymological invention:

> Self-presentiating women—being *wrong* according to the prevailing assumption—may be said to *sin*. It is pixilating to find that the word *sin* is probably etymologically akin to the Latin *est*, meaning (s)he *is*, and that it is derived from the Indo-European root *es-*, meaning *to be* (American Heritage Dictionary). Clearly, our ontological courage, our courage to be, implies the courage to be *wrong*. Elemental be-ing is Sinning; it requires the courage to Sin.[36]

4. *Conclusion*

There are, needless to say, signs of constructive (and perhaps less distorted) theological revivals outside the contexts outlined above. The Western Latin tradition described above is in serious difficulty, but the problems it experiences are not its alone; the tradition reflects societies and cultures in crisis. The doctrines of the Fall and of original sin have enjoyed long careers in our culture. Their partial and biased repristination is potentially dangerous and often a sign of the degeneration of theological reflection into self-justifying legitimations of genuine but sectional interests.

Good religion is truly universal; it does not demonize and alienate the 'other' within the body of humanity; healthy and suitably refunctioned doctrines of the Fall and original sin might help maintain hopes that the present condition is not ontologically or historically final but capable of salvific transformation in an open future. How these conceptions might regain their metaphorical (and metaphysical grip) upon both the religious imagination and the intellect is a question that must provoke further reflection on the part of all those who continue to recognize and to confront the consequences of their expulsion from the Garden of Eden.

Notes

1. The term 'human sciences' is here employed in the sense used by my Durham colleagues, Arthur Still and Irving Velody, editors of the journal *History of the Human Sciences*, who wrote in the first editorial:

> 'Human sciences', like the German *Geisteswissenschaft*, encompasses a number of different disciplines, including sociology, psychology, anthropology, and linguistics. Unlike 'social sciences' it suggests a critical and historical approach which transcends these specialisms and links their interests with those of philosophy, literary criticism, history, aesthetics, law, and politics (1/1 [1987], pp. 1-2).

The renewal of Christian systematic theology should in my view be undertaken in the context of an 'archaeology' (Michel Foucault) of the function of religion in the evolving history of the human sciences. The new Centre for Religion and the Human Sciences at the University of St Andrews will focus its efforts upon this task.

2. For an account of these processes of displacement in relation to nineteenth- and twentieth-century German thinkers, see R.H. Roberts, *From Hegel to Heidegger: Explorations in the After-life of Religion* (Bristol: The Bristol Press, forthcoming). While the title of this book draws upon the notion of the 'after-life of religion', a suggestive phrase that is inspired by George Steiner's *In Bluebeard's Castle* (London: Faber & Faber, 1971), analogous perspectives are also to be found in Jacques Derrida's 'White Mythology: Metaphor in the Text of Philosophy', in *Margins of Philosophy* (Brighton: Harvester Press, 1982). The decipherment of reality as palimpsest is a powerful metaphor readily translatable into the context of theological method.

3. *Der Römerbrief* (repr. Zurich, 1963 [1919]).

4. *Der Römerbrief* (Munich: Chr. Kaiser Verlag, 1922). The English translation is by E.C. Hoskyns, *The Epistle to the Romans* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1933).

5. Ed. G.T. Thomson (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1937ff.).

6. A problem here stems from the outdated positivistic radicalism of what sometimes and in some context passes for 'religious studies'. One approach to the consideration of the nature of the interdisciplinarity implied within the polydisciplinarity of religious studies might begin from the position outlined in the concluding chapter, 'Persuasive Discourse and Interdisciplinarity', in R.H. Roberts and J.M.M. Good (eds.), *The Recovery of Rhetoric: Persuasive Discourse and Interdisciplinarity in the Human Sciences* (Bristol: The Bristol Press, forthcoming), where we review the current discussion of interdisciplinarity in the human sciences.

7. For a wide-ranging overview see the relevant sections of 'Sunde und Schuld', *Religion in den Geschichte und Gegennt*, III.4 (Tübingen: Mohr, 1957), pp. 475-89.

8. Recent literature is surveyed in 'Natur und Gnade', in C. Andresen *et al.* (eds.), *Handbuch der Dogmen- und Theologiegeschichte*, I (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1982), pp. 445-63.

9. 'Original Sin', in K. Rahner and H. Vorgrimler (eds.), *Sacramentum Mundi*, IV (New York: Herder & Herder, 1969), p. 329.

10. These lectures were attended by figures as distinguished as Kierkegaard, Engels, Savigny, Trendelenburg, A. von Humboldt and Bakunin on an occasion that must rank as one of the last occasions in the nineteenth century when leading intellectuals collectively considered the status of Christian theological claims. See M. Frank (ed.), *F.W.J. Schelling Philosophie der Offenbarung 1841/42* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1977).

11. M. Horkheimer and T.W. Adorno, *Dialektik der Aufklarung* (New York, 1944) (ET: *Dialectic of Enlightenment* [trans. J. Cumming; New York: Herder & Herder, 1972]) is a profound and convoluted confession of the failure of the project of enlightened reason.

12. This is a tradition that persisted throughout the nineteenth and into the twentieth century, and even re-appeared in the aftermath of the recapitulation of the transition from Kant to Hegel in the relationship between Neo-Kantianism and Hegelianized Neo-Marxism. Thus, for example, Rudolf Otto's attempt to articulate 'das Heilige', in *The Idea of the Holy* (London: Oxford University Press, 1931 [1917]) follows in this tradition.

13. This term is used to denote the post-Kantian tendency to reconstruct theological systems in terms of a single category, for example (and most famously), in Schleiermacher's *Glaubenslehre*, where all the dogmatic *loci* are translatable into the universally pervasive common currency of the feeling of absolute dependence (*das schlechthinnige Abhangigkeitsgefuhl*). Thus *all* theological statements are, with astonishing intellectual (even aesthetic) consistency, renderable in terms of their subjective correlate. Indeed, for Schleiermacher, any theological statement not so translatable is inadmissable and falls outside the Christian faith.

14. This was Chr. Kaiser Verlag. Barth's association with this publisher served him well until his enforced removal from the University of Bonn in 1935 and his return to Switzerland where he took up a chair at the University of Basel.

15. *Epistle to the Romans*, p. 85.

16. *Epistle to the Romans*, pp. 85-86.

17. The reader is aware of the homiletic momentum, the near self-parody of the preaching style translated into a 'commentary'. This is part of a naked venture at the restructuring of theological discourse, a process which is simultaneously *both* deconstructive *and* reconstitutive. For some sense of the contextual *pathos* towards which this text was directed, see J. Moltmann, '*Warnung vor einem gefahrlichen Gluck*—Karl Barth "Der Römerbrief" (1922)', in G. Ruhle (ed.), *Bucher, die das Jahrhundert bewegten Zeitanalysen—Wiedergelesen* (Frankfurt am Main: Fischer, 1980), and R.H. Roberts, 'The Reception of the Theology of Karl Barth in the Anglo-Saxon World: History, Typology and Prospect', in S.W. Sykes (ed.), *Karl Barth: Centenary Essays* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990). I endorse Moltmann's claim that Barth's work is 'dangerous'.

18. *Römerbrief I* (1919), p. 66.

19. *Römerbrief I*, p. 67.

20. *Römerbrief I*, p. 67.

21. *Epistle to the Romans*, p. 87; *Römerbrief II*, p. 62.

22. *Epistle to the Romans*, p. 88; *Römerbrief II*, p. 62.

23. In the notorious *Nein! Antwort an Emil Brunner* of 1934, published in J. Baillie (intro.), *Natural Theology* (London: Geoffrey Bles, 1946).

24. *Epistle to the Romans*, p. 88; *Römerbrief II*, p. 62.

25. I use the term 'refunction' in the way suggested by Ernst Bloch's notion of *Umfunktionierung*; in the 'after-life' of religion it is unwise merely to *recover* the past (this would be flight from reality).

26. In, for example, *Creation and Fall* (London: SCM Press, 1959), and the posthumous *Ethics* (London: SCM Press, 1955).

27. For an unrivalled account of this period, see C. Gestrich, *Neuzeitliches Denken und die Spaltung der dialektischen Theologie Zur Frage der naturlichen Theologie* (Tübingen: Mohr, 1977).

28. *Dogmatics*, IV.1, p. 157.

29. I here use Hans Urs von Balthasar's suggestive conception employed in his study, *Karl Barth—Deutung und Darstellung seiner Theologie* (Einsiedeln: Johannes Verlag, 1951).

30. *Dogmatics*, IV.1, p. 157.

31. *Dogmatics*, IV.1, p. 361.

32. *Dogmatics*, IV.1, pp. 358-513.

33. *Dogmatics*, IV.1, p. 508.

34. *Dogmatics*, IV.1, p. 511.

35. A further strand to be found in 'green', ecological theology would appear to follow this pattern with a stigmatizing of capitalist and industrial development.

36. *Pure Lust and Elemental Feminist Philosophy* (London: The Women's Press, 1984), p. 151. The similarity of Daly's views with those of Paul Tillich (but of course in systematically inverted form) is remarkable.

'REFUSING TO LEARN TO SAY "NO"': KARL BARTH AND THE GARDEN OF EDEN

Mark Corner

> Will man acknowledge and praise God as the One who has found concerning good and evil, salvation and perdition, life and death, so that all that he has to do is to rejoice and be thankful—consciously thankful—on the earth which has been created? Or will he hold aloof from this offer of supreme fellowship between God and himself and lay down the impossible but tempting condition that he must first know evil as well as good... [1]

Barth argues that in being confronted with the possibility of eating from the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil, humanity is tempted not to praise God but to aspire to be like God. Praising God implies a recognition of distance between the human and the divine. It suggests the otherness of God to ourselves which makes the Christian worship and adore the divine being but not seek equality with it. It identifies human beings with the example of Christ, who 'though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped'.[2] Barth suggests that in being forbidden to eat from the tree, humanity is commanded to live in that 'supreme fellowship', as he puts it, between creature and creator which exists only when the creature recognizes its proper distance from the maker of all things. Barth continues:

> Instead of recognising and praising God as the Judge, will he use the indication and revelation of the divine judicial office for the purpose of standing alongside God in a perception of the depths of His wrath as well as His love... [3]

If humanity eats of the Tree of Knowledge, then it will not simply stand under God's judgment but share God's judgment. Rather than be judged, humanity will seek the power to judge for itself. Like Job in his demand that the creator be subject to a judicial review, those who eat of the Tree of Knowledge wish to understand the ways of God towards the world. It is not that the temptation presented to Adam and Eve is that of doing evil rather than good. It is that they are tempted to acquire the *ability* to do either—to 'know' good and evil.

By eating of the tree, humanity does not, in Barth's presentation, achieve the 'divine' capacity for judgment which it seeks. This capacity is one which God alone possesses, and is not transferable. God alone 'stands between' good and evil, able to pronounce judgment; humanity is equipped only for good, cut off from evil, and denied the power of discrimination between the two which it seeks. Human freedom is a freedom to obey rather than to choose, a freedom not to 'decide' for God but to respect and obey God's decision for men and women. They are invited by God to accept the divine judgment and election which belong to God alone. They are asked to acknowledge the decision of God rather than to make their own decision.

Nevertheless they eat of the tree. This eating, Barth explains, must imply their death; for the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil 'says negatively' what the Tree of Life 'says positively'. As the latter affirms positively that humanity is made for life, the former affirms negatively that this life entails a consent of men and women to judgment being vested in God alone.

As a result of the misdeed represented in our eating of the Tree of Knowledge, however, we are not subjected to what Barth calls 'a curse' eternally perpetuating our dying. By being, as the Genesis narrative continues, cast out of the Garden of Eden, humanity is preserved from the fate that would have awaited it within the Garden. Barth presents the expulsion of Adam and Eve from Eden, not as a punishment designed to wreak vengeance on those who were disobedient, but as a merciful act designed to protect them from death. God appears rather like a collaborator in the exile of a person wanted in their own country for some unforgivable outrage.

Through eating from the Tree of Knowledge, the first humans have attempted to wrest a form of life which is 'inwardly impossible' for them, by seeking a power of judgment which is God's alone. Their attempted 'robbery' has dire consequences. They are like children who have stolen sweets that turn out to be poison, and from which they will soon die. To save them, God cannot do anything by surgery. The only remedy is to send them out of Eden into a kind of suspended animation in which they are frozen in their moribund condition in a kind of half-life. Barth presents Adam and Eve faced with an impossible situation having eaten of the Tree of Knowledge. Should they regain life, the poison will resume its course. Having acquired the knowledge of good and evil, they are bound to die from their stolen capacity to understand as God understands. But if they seek to avoid this fate, it can only be by remaining in a kind of shadow-existence, a realm of semi-conscious half-awareness outside the Garden:

> The abnormal relationship into which he had fallen would then have assumed the nature of finality, his curse the nature of a definitive determination, and his death the character of eternal death... But because God did not will him to fall so deeply, he had to be removed from the tree of life and therefore from God's immediate presence.[4]

The immediate presence of God is something which, as Barth points out, the Hebrew Bible continually describes as denied to humanity. Moses is warned not to let the priests and people 'come up to the Lord' on Mt Sinai, 'lest he break out against them' (Exod. 19.24). Moses himself is refused a vision of God's face, 'for man shall not see me and live' (Exod. 33.20). To Barth, it is this necessary separation of creature from creator, whose purpose is the *protection* of the creature from a divine presence which it could not endure, that is transgressed by the eating of the Tree of Knowledge, and whose consequences for humanity God mitigates through establishing that distance between the divine and human which is represented in the act of banishing Adam and Eve from the Garden of Eden.

Barth's interpretation expresses familiar themes from his overall theological scheme. His highly original and significant commentary on Romans, the work that brought him worldwide recognition, reverberates with the principle that an 'infinite qualitative distinction' exists between the divine and the human. Men and women must avoid, he argues, that essentially possessive attempt to pin God down to human formulations that informed so much of the theology of his day. Where the ancient Israelites were warned against idols made from wood and stone, the theologians of Barth's day had to be warned against a mental idolatry that sought to hold God within the limits of a definition. God can no more be encompassed by the human mind than sculptured in clay or bronze. The perennial human attempt to know God, rather than to acknowledge the unknowability of God, is identified with much of the reductionist theology which Karl Barth identified with liberal Protestantism and traditional Catholic theology founded upon the principle of an 'analogy of being' between the nature of God and that of humanity.[5]

Thus it is the 'Goodness of God', the essential otherness of the divine being to the human, and the endemic straining of the latter to bridge the divide between them, that forms the self-confessed *leitmotif* of Barth's great commentary. Later work is an attempt to add to that theme. In the systematic *Church Dogmatics*, he answers the criticism that an unknowable God can only be the object of agnostic indifference on the part of humanity, by highlighting the Christocentric character of Christian theology. This affirms that the distance between God and humanity may be crossed, but only from the side of the creator towards the creature, never in the opposite direction. The attempt of men and women to bridge the divine is still excluded as strongly as before. The separation between God and humanity can be overcome—but only by God in the form of Christ, never by men and women themselves.

Into this overall theological pattern, Barth's interpretation of the Fall fits as a prototype of human pretension, the model of that human aspiring after the divine that is repeated and revealed in all human dealings with God. Against it, Barth sets the model of the divine aspiring after the human, 'God's search for man' rather than man's search for God,[6] and the demand that men and women accept the divine decision for them expressed in Christ rather than seek the power of judgment for themselves.

Barth's analysis, of course, is not unique. It fits into a recognizable pattern of neo-orthodox thinking in the twentieth century, and into a broader spectrum of Reformation theology and insights from the 'biblical theology' movement of the modern era. The opening pages of Dietrich Bonhoeffer's *Ethics* contain one of the most succinct modern accounts of the Fall that follows Barth's analysis. They present it in the context of a reflection upon what it means for the believer to talk about a 'Christian ethics' which few ethicists even today are prepared to think seriously about:

> The knowledge of good and evil seems to be the aim of all ethical reflection... Man at his origin knows only one thing: God. It is only in the unity of this knowledge of God that he knows of other men, of things, and of himself. He knows all things only in God, and God in all things. The knowledge of good and evil shows that he is no longer at one with his origin... In the knowledge of good and evil... he knows himself now as something apart from God, outside God, and this means that he now knows only himself and no longer knows God at all; for he can know God only if he knows only God. The knowledge of good and evil

> is therefore separation from God. Only against God can man know good and evil.[7]

Bonhoeffer echoes Barth's view of a 'supreme fellowship' between God and humanity which is lost through the latter's partaking of the Tree of Knowledge. The starting point of secular ethics, that of a quest to distinguish between what is right and wrong, good and evil, is one which from the perspective of Christian theology represents the fallen condition of the human person. Only as fallen can the individual ask the question: what is right? In the fullness of fellowship between God and humanity which preceded the Fall, that question was unasked. Adam and Eve had no means of asking it. In the Garden of Eden there was no possibility of ethics. It was not a realm in which humanity always did good and had not yet learned to do evil, but a realm in which the distinctions that are natural to the moralist were unnatural to the first human beings. They had not taken upon themselves the capacity to make them.

It is not difficult for a theologian in the late twentieth century to see how Barth's interpretation might be criticized. Apart from specific questions of biblical exegesis, the whole tenor of his analysis is almost anathema to many of the ideological presuppositions of contemporary capitalist society within which he is currently read and understood. A secular environment which elevates freedom of choice above all other considerations, and likes to believe that in Western society individuals are free to determine their own lives (whatever the social cost as they interrelate with other individuals), is liable to view with horror the idea that human freedom can be anything other than freedom *of choice*, in other words a power to decide between alternatives. Barth's idea that there is something else to be said where freedom is concerned can only appear dishonest and even dangerous to such an environment, suggesting the embrace of totalitarian forms of thought.

Hence we find Karl Barth in a later volume of the *Church Dogmatics* comment as follows:

> It [human freedom] is certainly freedom of choice. But as freedom given by God, as freedom in action, it is the freedom of a right choice. The choice is right when it corresponds to the free choice of God.[8]

It is easy to see how this Barthian language could be interpreted as a rationalization of totalitarianism. The choice can only be 'free' when it is the 'right' choice, and the 'right' choice is the identification of human choices with the choice that God has already made. The tyrant's ironic remark that people are free to do what they like so long as they do what he tells them is easily perceived to lie behind Barth's theological position. The denial to humanity of a 'right' to know good and evil, and the identification of fellowship between God and human persons with the latter's refusal to acquire the power of judgment for themselves is seen as a justification for infantilism, a desire to see people subject to a ruler—whether divine or human—who decides important questions for them rather than teaching them to decide for themselves. As a consequence, doctrines such as that of the Fall have to be reinterpreted, in the language of John Hick, in an 'Irenaean' sense which removes all elements of tragic disobedience and punishment from the story of Adam and Eve's rebellion against God. Instead, they are seen as pioneers on the road to maturity, leaving the Garden as adolescents might leave the parental home and set off to make their own lives.[9] The story of Adam and Eve becomes a sort of family row, leading the humans to pack their bags and leave home, distancing themselves from an irate 'father' who has to come to terms with his offspring's will to maturity.

I should like to suggest that this is too easy and facile an attempt to remove those dark themes of the loss of innocence and the banishment from God's presence which are contained within the Genesis narrative. In the rest of this essay I should like to attempt to defend Barth's interpretation, which deserves more consideration than it sometimes receives.

Bonhoeffer and Barth both regard the condition of choice as a fallen condition, a result of humanity losing its original oneness with God. They do not wish to undermine freedom of choice on earth, but they do wish to identify it as part of the limited, finite nature of men and women as the sinful creatures of God. They insist that the nature of humanity before the Fall was a qualitatively different one to the nature of humanity after the Fall. Hence the sort of freedom which is prized as a power of decision between alternatives is presented by Barth and Bonhoeffer as something which does not reflect the ultimate destiny of humanity nor its original nature. It may be a necessary quality in human society but it cannot be 'absolutized' into the defining characteristic of men and women as rational creatures. Barth and Bonhoeffer insist that whatever their desirability on earth, and whatever the dire social consequences of their denial in persecution and tyranny, the power of choice and the capacity for moral judgment nevertheless reflect something of the tragedy in humanity's fallen condition. The struggle to know what is good and evil and to recognize what is of value has about it something of the self-destructive power which the original quest for knowledge produced in the myth of the Garden.

Karl Barth's analysis of Genesis retains something that the 'Irenaean' perspective of John Hick loses, and this is the perception that human freedom bears a cost which no cosy analogy between the banishment of Adam and Eve from the Garden and the encouragement of a maturing adolescent to find his or her own feet away from home can properly convey. The radical evil in humanity was capable of turning freedom into a weapon against good; the confusion of rationality by humanity's condition in society was capable of twisting the power of choice into an enthusiastic response to ideas which would ultimately prove destructive of human life. Observing the fatal collapse of German society in the early 1930s, Barth remarked that experiencing the German political situation in the years leading to Hitler's accession to power was 'like sitting in a car which is driven by a man who is either incompetent or drunk'.[10] This raises the question: as free beings are we like maturing adolescents learning to manage our own lives, or like drunks behind the wheel of a car, unable to cope with the responsibility thrust upon us and therefore heading for destruction?

Barth's view was coloured by a particular situation of social collapse, but it should not be assumed too readily that our own situation is different. Politicians still prefer to talk of a society under human control, to be steered in one direction or another according to the freely expressed wishes of electorates. In reality, society appears only partially within human control. More often than not, it reveals itself to be governed by forces beyond the power of those who live in it, whether by movements of international capital or the steady accumulation of destructive weaponry generated by a combination of technological advance and political indifference. Barth turned his back on the popular prejudice, as he saw it, of Western society in the years leading up to the First World War, which assumed that technological advance and growing political maturity would between them ensure a gradual increase in civilization on earth. In a similar way, many today see little prospect of automatic social benefit from increased scientific knowledge, living as they do under the shadow cast by many of the products of that knowledge.

In his great commentary on Romans, Barth challenged both 'reactionaries' and 'revolutionaries' for their political attitudes. The former sought to absolutize the present order of society; the latter sought to absolutize an alternative order. For Barth, the only realistic position was one that refused to absolutize any order of society. 'Popular fatalism' recognized an implicit human pretentiousness and self-assertion in the claim to be able to 'manage' society, from whatever quarter it came. It saw in human freedom not the opportunity to build a great tomorrow, but the tragi-comic condition of men and women struggling to stay above water in a tide of life that eventually must overwhelm them. Freedom, for Barth, was better than tyranny, but it was still something which we are fundamentally unable to cope with. It was neither there at the beginning, nor will it be there at the end. It is not the condition of humanity at one with its creator.

The controversial aspect of Barth's treatment of the Garden of Eden lies in its understanding of present human life as 'unnatural', if by natural is meant the original condition of humanity before the Fall. The 'Irenaean' perspective on the events in the Garden of Eden assumes the opposite. The Fall is all part of God's purpose in bringing us to maturity, as 'natural' as the grown-up child's move away from home. Barth's understanding of the myth is different. By talking in terms of a 'Fall', by talking as if the decision to eat of the Tree of Knowledge was a decision made *against* rather than in line with God's wishes, Barth insists upon seeing in the present condition of humanity something irredeemably flawed. Such a perspective, he felt, challenged the optimism and faith in progress both of capitalism as it understood his own society and of communism as it understood the possibilities of an alternative society. It questioned the ideology common to both, that the experience of humanity was one of learning to manage society in a rational and beneficial way under God. Since the power of freedom which human beings used was a power 'stolen' from God, a power unnatural to men and women, its use was more likely to be destructive than educative. The best response for humanity was to recognize that potential for destruction and accept that only God could know good and evil. 'Popular fatalism' was not, for Barth, a vacuum to be filled by a new optimism, but a perennial vaccine against tyranny, for tyranny is the product of excessive human expectation.

Barth quite enjoyed displaying a knockabout style with his opponents, erecting Aunt Sallies and then destroying them, adopting a sort of triumphalist negativity towards the products of human labour and imagination paraded before him. A self-indulgence crept into his approach. Yet his fundamental vision of humanity not naturally but *un*naturally endowed with freedom and judgment on earth deserves to be taken more seriously. Numerous works of theology published today encourage us to believe in the possibility of progress whilst holding up before us a vision of hunger, inequality, nuclear danger and human malice in present society. No act of political foolishness or inhumanity is allowed to diminish the author's vision of future bliss—indeed it is almost used to increase it, as if the present difficulties were so great that improvement must be inevitable. No attempt is made to leave the arena of theological generalization and adopt the hard political analysis necessary to understand the problems of society. It should be clear that without such an analysis no effective change can be brought about and that the resistance to such an analysis, by human beings whose laziness and self-interest provide an effective barrier to it, is virtually insuperable.

Barth does not encourage any complacency about or tolerance of the evils which are perceived in society. Rather, the opposite is the case. Those who believe they are in reach of realizing their vision of perfection, or who blind themselves to present ills by regarding the contemporary order as perfect, are more likely to overlook the sort of difficulties which challenge their optimism. For Barth, we are in a mess because we are living beyond our spiritual means, trying to cope with a situation that we are not suited to deal with, not least because we refuse to adopt a hard political attitude and *analyse* it. Whatever our aspirations to stand on our own two feet, we are fundamentally fallen.

In a situation where we cannot succeed in putting right what is wrong, because as human beings we lack the resources and the analysis to do so, there is no justification for a lack of social concern. To see that a perfect relationship with God must be in a context totally other than that in which we now struggle to order our lives does not entail that we have to ignore the responsibilities of the present. Because of the myth of the Garden of Eden, and the recognition that it is now closed to us, we have to face the problems of society as tragic necessities rather than temporary aberrations delaying the arrival of the perfect order. For they express something perennially disturbing about human freedom here on earth, something driving men and women in directions which threaten to destroy them. It could well be argued that the end of the twentieth century, no less than the beginning, illustrates this inability to cope with the power unleashed by progress. The myth of the eating from the Tree of Knowledge expresses the danger of humanity grasping after power in the mistaken belief that this power brings no dangers, can always be rationally controlled and mastered, that it will always support and never threaten human life.

The present technocratic prejudice of society sees only what can be controlled and manipulated by humanity. But the arts generally, and theology in particular, point in a fundamentally different direction, towards the intractable nature of problems which at once excite and frustrate human attempts to deal with them. There is nothing in the minds of our present leaders remotely capable of that vision which sees at once the power for good and for evil in humanity as it seeks to express itself in a fundamentally alien environment. In this society, where all the argument is about movements of capital and the needs of industry, it is vital that the myths which express a deeper truth about the human condition live on.

For his many critics, Karl Barth's theology has about it an air of patronising self-assurance, and a confidence in theological solutions to non-theological problems which threatens to contain all other forms of knowledge within a theological straightjacket such as that which ordered all forms of learning in mediaeval society. This paper is designed to offer an alternative perspective. Theological myths such as that of the Fall exercise a powerful influence upon the popular imagination, and often remain the only vehicles of important truths when they have to survive in a secular culture such as that of contemporary Britain. The myth of the Fall reminds us that our current confidence in human ability, encouraged by our own highly technocratic society with its emphasis upon what can be managed and manipulated by human beings, is not a complete picture of human nature. What we have as rational beings is also capable of being seen as a power which unleashes darkness as well as light, a capacity which we lack the moral and spiritual resources to contain. We are struggling to cope, whatever the current ideology may try to pretend about our infinite resources of global management. The myth of the Fall forces this note of tragic realism into our lives. Imagine, it suggests, that the freedom we prize were a power like that which Prometheus stole from the gods, something which we were forbidden to take, which we could not handle for ourselves, which God could save us from only by making our own decisions ultimately insignificant. Would the vision which that myth supplies us with make any less sense of our world, with its uncontrollable forces of technological advance, than the cosy assurance of technocratic management or the liberal theologian's Irenaean principle of humanity progressing steadily to maturity? Of course, if it is obvious to us that we have long since learned to manage our lives, and learned when to say 'yes' and 'no', then the older myths will have outlived their day. But it would be unwise to underestimate the complex emotions with which after two millennia men and women confront the potential for evil as well as good which hangs over them. To say to them, as Barth does, 'Imagine for a moment that the abilities which you prize most in yourselves it would be better to be without, because their exercise is likely to lead to your destruction and the loss of that unity with God which is our ultimate destiny' may not seem like a message much in tune with the current ideology of individual opportunity and infinite human skill. But it at least presents us with an alternative vision, one which time has not diminished, and which provides us with the means to criticize some of the predominant assumptions of our culture from which we all too easily find ourselves unable to stand back.

Suggestions for Further Reading

For Barth's own views I would recommend his commentary on Romans, which is not only his most dynamic and readable work, but is far more representative of his ideas than is often made out. Barth's own view was that his later work *added to* the views in *Romans* but did not contradict them.

John Hick's *Evil and the God of Love* is a clear and readable work on theodicy which examines different views of the Fall. It is not always historically accurate, and it is certainly unable to come to terms with Barth (it concentrates on his discussion of 'Das Nichtige' in 3.3 rather than on the sections of the *Church Dogmatics* discussed here). But it should be read.

For a view of human nature deeply influenced by Barth and with much to say about the myth of the Fall, I would recommend Reinhold Niebuhr's *The Nature and Destiny of Man*, published in two volumes by Nisbet, London, in 1943.

The collection of sermons by Barth and Thurneysen contains one called 'Paradise Lost', based on Gen. 2.8-25 (pp. 93-105). Although it has all the deficiencies of sermonizing, it presents the view Barth held of the function of the myth of the Fall well enough. The collection was published by T. & T. Clark in 1935. Its chief editor was Elmer G. Homrighausen.

Notes

1. Karl Barth, *Church Dogmatics*, III.1 (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1936ff.), pp. 260-61.

2. See Phil. 2.5-11.

3. Barth, *Dogmatics*, III.1, p. 261.

4. Barth, *Dogmatics*, III.1, p. 284.

5. These issues are explored by a number of writers on Barth. John Bowden's introductory work, *Karl Barth* (London: SCM Press, 1971), provides a solid beginning.

6. *God's Search for Man* was the title of a work intended by Barth as a deliberate riposte to those who believed that the starting point for any theology must be with humanity in its search for the divine.

7. D. Bonhoeffer, *Ethics* (London: SCM Press, 1960), pp. 142-43.

8. Barth, *Dogmatics*, III.2, pp. 196-97.

9. See Hick's *Evil and the God of Love* (London: Fontana, 1966).

10. From E. Busch, *Karl Barth: His Life* (London: SCM Press, 1976).

RESURRECTING EVE?
FEMINIST CRITIQUE OF THE GARDEN OF EDEN

Deborah F. Sawyer

In recent years one character from the Garden of Eden story has come to the fore in discussions involving both Judaism and Christianity, and has dominated hermeneutical work on this text. The character is Eve, and her prominence comes as a result of the impact of feminist critique on Judaism, Christianity and biblical studies. When we look at these three categories from the outset, we can discern a particular problem for Christianity, with its doctrine of original sin, in Augustinian terms, linked to Eve's offer of the fruit to Adam, its commitment to a sexual hierarchy based on the order of creation, and its theology of Mary of Nazareth as the New Eve.

In contrast, Judaism's dialogue with feminism tends to centre on the estimation of women reflected by the Torah, and Eve is seen from that perspective. For example, God's words in Gen. 3.16, regarding the woman's desire for her husband, are understood in talmudic terms as an obligation on the husband to fulfil the woman's sexual needs.[1] Jewish and post-Jewish feminist writers have seen the Eden narrative as a lucrative source for developing an alternative mythology of origins. Judith Plaskow Goldenberg's story, 'The Coming of Lilith', is one example that incorporates the figure of Lilith into the Eden story, and develops an original sisterhood through the relationship between Eve and Lilith.[2]

In Jewish theology, Eve is not a pivotal character; Sarah and the other matriarchs are more central to tradition, perhaps because they are the women who play key roles in Israel's election which is of more immediate interest to Judaism than the universal origins of humanity. There is no New Eve theology in Judaism and idealized womanhood is personified by the *Shekhinah* and the Torah, rather than the virgin mother. In Jewish/feminist dialogue, Eve can be used as one female biblical character among many that need to be either recovered or rejected.

It is Christian theology that has invested Eve with a unique position regarding the Fall and redemption, and makes her the representative and type of all women, even the Blessed Virgin Mary who is the New Eve as Christ is the New Adam. This centrality is reflected in the work of Christian biblical commentators from Jerome to Phyllis Trible. The figure of Eve lies at the heart of Christianity's understanding and estimation of women. Today she demands and achieves the closest attention of all scholars who wish either to revise that estimation of women or to uphold it.

From earliest times it is possible to discern three basic arguments in Christian theology regarding Eve. These, although distinctive, are interrelated and to some extent interdependent through the biblical text they share and the conclusions they reach.

1. *Second in the Order of Creation*

The first argument is founded on the order of creation described in Genesis 2 where the text can suggest that Eve is created after Adam and for Adam's needs:

> Then the Lord God said, 'It is not good that man should be alone; I will make him a helper fit for him' (Gen. 2.18).

In Christian theology, this verse became the proof-text for maintaining a sexual hierarchy in the Christian family and in ecclesiastical office. The Genesis account of the order of creation was used in the earliest accounts of Christianity, the Pauline Epistles, in order to define the position of women. Two of these texts, 1 Cor. 11.7-9 and 1 Tim. 2.13, most clearly bring to mind the Genesis text. In the 1 Corinthians passage, St Paul attempts to persuade the women of the congregation not to show off their hair while leading prayers or prophesying:[3]

> For a man ought not to cover his head, since he is the image and glory of God; but woman is the glory of man. (For man was not made from woman, but woman from man. Neither was man created for woman, but woman for man.) (1 Cor. 11.7-9).

This passage relates to a particular problem regarding a particular Christian community at a particular time in history, but since it is part of the Christian canon of Scripture it has been used by the Church as normative teaching in every century. Perhaps most sinister was the conclusion deduced from this passage that women did not bear the image of God in an identical way or proportion to that of men. John Chrysostom, writing in the fourth century, interprets this passage to imply that women lost their divine image as a result of the Fall.[4] He notes that the Greek word, ἐξουσία, that is usually translated 'veil' from its context in 1 Cor. 11.10, actually means 'authority'. This is something that women lack since God made them subservient to men as a punishment for Eve's disobedience:

> For the 'image' is not meant in regard to essence, but in regard to authority, as we shall make clear by bringing forth arguments in an orderly manner. To grasp the point that the form of man is not that of God, listen to what Paul says: 'For the man ought not to be veiled, for he is the image and glory of God. But woman is the glory of man. Therefore she ought to have a veil [Greek: 'authority'] on her head.' Indeed if Paul here says this was the 'image', making clear the unchangeableness of the form that is patterned on God, then man is called the 'image of God' because God has stamped him in this way.
>
> Not so, according to our opponents, who argue that not only the man must have the 'image', but the woman as well. Our answer is that the man and the woman do have one form, one distinctive character, one likeness. Then why is the man said to be in the 'image of God' and the woman not? Because what Paul says about the 'image' does not pertain to form. The 'image' has rather to do with authority, and this only the man has; the woman has it no longer. For he is subjected to no one, while she is subjected to him; as God said, 'Your inclination shall be for your husband and he shall rule over you' (Gen. 3.16). Therefore the man is in the 'image of God' since he had no one above him, just as God has no superior but rules over everything. The woman, however, is 'the glory of man', since she is subjected to him.[5]

Here we discover how a sexual hierarchy becomes part of Christian theology. Not only is Eve the second sex because she was created after Adam, but through her disobedience she is distinct from men: she no longer shares God's image.

The second passage from the Pauline literature, 1 Tim. 2.13, begins by highlighting the order of creation: 'For Adam was formed first, then Eve'. The passage continues by mentioning Eve's disobedience, and, in the context of the Epistle, belongs to a longer discourse on ecclesiastical organization. The initial comment on the order of creation is included to ensure that women take no part in teaching men in the churches.

New Testament scholars are divided on the question of the author-ship of 1 Timothy, namely over whether it was written by St Paul.[6] This question is not of paramount importance when we are considering the history of interpretation of this passage, and others, which display a clear sexual hierarchy, since it is their canonical status that has given them primary authority in the Church. It is relevant, however, when we want to consider the context in which such attitudes to women might have arisen. In Fiorenza's seminal work, *In Memory of Her*, these passages are set in their Graeco-Roman context, as well as taking into consideration the Jewish basis of the early Jesus movement. Fiorenza notes the influence of Aristotle's ideas of sexual hierarchy, and domestic and political hierarchy, on particular New Testament texts, and sees in them late first-century attempts in the Christian communities to conform to the norms of their immediate society.[7] One of the most important features of Fiorenza's work is her insistence on reading these texts 'against the grain', that is, to take seriously the situations where women *were* included in all aspects of community life to such an extent that their activities prompted such admonitions against women teaching men, or asserting authority outside a domestic sphere.

When these admonitions were taken alongside the sexual hierarchy reflected in the New Testament's household codes[8] ('Wives, be subject to your husbands, as to the Lord... ' [Eph. 5.22]), the Church Fathers had firm scriptural foundations for developing a Christian attitude to womankind that was in sympathy with that common in Graeco-Roman culture with its Aristotelian heritage. We find Augustine, for example, puzzling over the very creation of woman: what was the point of God creating such a creature? He wonders whether the description of woman as 'helper' (Gen. 2.18) infers that she would help the man with manual labour.[9] He dismisses this since prior to the Fall such hard labour did not exist, and, furthermore, if God had wanted such a labourer then another man would have been more suitable. He continues:

> One can also posit that the reason for her creation as a helper had to do with the companionship she could provide for the man, if perhaps he got bored with his solitude. Yet for company and conversation, how much more agreeable it is for two male friends to dwell together than for a man and woman![10]

Continuing this passage, his eventual answer includes an affirmation that the order of creation signifies woman's natural subordination:

> If it is necessary for one of two people living together to rule and the other to obey so that an opposition of wills does not disturb their peaceful cohabitation, then nothing is missing from the order we see in Genesis directed to this restraint, for one person was created before, the other afterwards, and most significantly, the latter was created from the former, the woman from the man. And nobody wants to suggest, does he, that God, if he so willed, could only make a woman from a man's side, yet that he couldn't create a man as well? I cannot think of any reason for woman's being made as man's helper, if we dismiss the reason of procreation.[11]

Procreation, then, for Augustine, was the only valid reason behind God's decision to create woman, and the ultimate peak in this process comes when the unique woman, without tarnish of sin, brings forth the Christ-child into the world.

This concept of a 'natural order' among the sexes reflects basic Aristotelian concepts:

> There are by nature various classes of rulers and ruled. For the free rules the slave, the male the female, the man the child in a different way. And all possess the various parts of the soul but possess them in different ways; for the slave has not got the deliberative part of all, and the female has it but without full authority, while the child has it but in an undeveloped form (*Politics* 1.1260a).[12]

John Chrysostom vividly applies this natural order of the sexes:

> Our life is customarily organized into two spheres: public affairs and private matters, both of which are determined by God. To woman is assigned the presidency of the household; to man, all the business of state, the marketplace, the administration of justice, government, the military, and all other such enterprises. . . Indeed, this is a work of God's love and wisdom, that he who is skilled at the greater things is downright inept and useless in the performance of the less important ones, so that the woman's service is necessary. For if the man were adapted to undertake both sorts of activities, the female sex could easily be despised. Conversely, if the more important, more beneficial concerns were turned over to the woman, she would go quite mad.[13]

This form of sexual hierarchy still operates today in many spheres of our society. Such attitudes and practices in ecclesiastical contexts are a direct reflection of the New Testament's household codes and they use the story of Eve's creation as further theological underpinning.

2. *Originator of Sin*

The belief that the Fall of the human race came about through Eve's act of eating the fruit of the tree in the 'midst of the Garden' (Gen. 3.6) can be found in Christian theology from as early as the New Testament period. Traces of it appear also in Ben Sira, a Jewish apocryphal work, written in 180 BCE:

> From a woman sin had its beginning, and because of her we all die (25.24).

This verse comes at the end of a passage describing the dreadful situation for a man who has a bad wife:

> I would rather dwell with a lion and a dragon than dwell with an evil wife. The wickedness of a wife changes her appearance, and darkens her face like that of a bear. Her husband takes his meals among the neighbours, and cannot help sighing bitterly. . . (25.16-18).

When we examine this passage to try and discover what is particularly 'evil' about this 'wife' there appears to be only one concrete 'problem':

> There is wrath and impudence and great disgrace when a wife supports her husband (25.22).

The crux of the problem with the woman described in this passage is that she has wealth in her own right. This, according to the writer of Ben Sira, is the source of total anarchy in the domestic sphere. Could it be that here we are hearing echoes of Aristotle? His reactions to ancient Sparta where women did control their own wealth reflect a similar fear of domestic anarchy:

> The freedom in regard to women is detrimental both in regard to the purpose of the *politeia* and in regard to the happiness of the state. For just as man and wife are part of a household, it is clear that the state also is divided nearly in half into its male and female population, so that in all *politeia* in which the position of women is badly regulated one half of the state must be deemed neglected in framing the law (*Politics* 2.1269b).

When a concept such as this is taken up and set out in a religious text it gains a theological dimension. In the case of Ben Sira that dimension is traced back to the Garden of Eden. The same is true of certain New Testament passages.

The first evidence we find in the New Testament of Eve being deemed uniquely culpable is in 2 Corinthians:

> But I am afraid that as the serpent deceived Eve by his cunning, your thoughts will be led astray from a sincere and pure devotion to Christ. . . (11.3).

This develops into a more clear-cut argument for Eve's guilt in 1 Timothy, and here I will give the full text of the passage I mentioned earlier:

> I desire that in every place the men should pray, lifting holy hands without anger or quarrelling; also that women should adorn themselves modestly and sensibly in seemly apparel, not with braided hair or gold or pearls or costly attire but by good deeds as befits women who profess religion. Let a woman learn in silence with all submissiveness. I permit no woman to teach or to have authority over men; she is to keep silent. For Adam was formed first, then Eve; and Adam was not deceived, but the woman was deceived and became a transgressor. Yet woman will be saved through bearing children, if she continues in faith and love and holiness, with modesty (2.8-15).

Here we can see that the argument for female subordination based on the order of creation is overtaken by that of woman as the originator of sin.

This one passage from a short Epistle became the foundation of Christian theology about women and their role and status in the Church. In it we see that the figure of Eve is of central importance: she is the first sinner, and furthermore, she is the embodiment of all womankind. It would seem that her sin was so great that she and the rest of womankind fall outside the redemptive power of Christ. Their salvation comes through childbearing and modest dress and behaviour rather than through the death and resurrection of the Son of God. The theology of this verse is a factor leading to Augustine's belief, quoted above, that the only reason for woman's existence was procreation.

We find this same attitude regarding the necessity for modesty amongst Eve and her daughters expressed by the late second-century Christian writer Tertullian in his discourse *On the Dress of Women*:

> (1.1.1.) If such strong faith remained on earth, as strong as the reward of faith is expected in heaven, not one of you, dearest sisters, from the time she acknowledged the living God and learned about herself, that is, about the condition of women, would have desired a more charming dress, not to speak of a more exquisite one. She would rather go about in cheap clothes and strive for an appearance characterised by neglect. She would carry herself around like Eve, mourning and penitent, that she might more

> fully expiate by each garment of penitence that which she acquired from Eve—I mean the degradation of the first sin and the hatefulness of human perdition. 'In pains and anxieties you bring forth children, woman, and your inclination is for your husband, and he rules over you' (Gen. 3.16)—and you know not that you also are an Eve
>
> (1.1.2.) God's judgment on this sex lives on in our age; the guilt necessarily lives on as well. *You* are the Devil's gateway; *you* are the unsealer of that tree; *you* are the first forsaker of the divine law; *you* are the one who persuaded him whom the Devil was not brave enough to approach; *you* so lightly crushed the image of God, the man Adam; because of *your* punishment, that is death, even the Son of God had to die. And you think to adorn yourself beyond your 'tunics of skins' (Gen. 3.21)?[14]

As in the case of the passage from 1 Timothy, Tertullian steeps his arguments in material from Genesis 3; and, again like the writer of 1 Timothy, sees Eve as 'everywoman'. Here the female sex has a particular responsibility not only for the first sin, but also for the death of Christ. The more one particular interpretation of Genesis 3 became embedded in Christian theology, the more marginalized women became from the heart of that religion. They became identified with the 'other' in opposition to the normative male sex, perfected in the incarnation of the divine into human male form.[15]

In the century following Tertullian, both Ambrose and Augustine echo and reinforce the theological basis of sexual hierarchy through the belief in Eve's primary responsibility for the Fall, constantly referring back to the words of 1 Timothy:

> The woman, therefore, is the originator of the man's wrongdoing, not the man of the woman's. Hence Paul says, 'Adam was not deceived, but the woman was deceived and committed sin' (1 Tim. 2.14).[16]

> The apostle Paul's words were not meaningless when he said, 'For Adam was formed first, then Eve. And Adam was not led astray, but the woman was, and was made guilty of transgression' (1 Tim. 2.13-14), i.e., that through her the man became guilty of transgression. For the apostle calls him a transgressor as well when he says, 'In the likeness of the transgression of Adam, who is a figure of him who is to come' (Rom. 5.14), but he does *not* say that Adam was 'led astray'. For even when asked, Adam does not reply, 'The woman whom you gave me led me astray and I ate', but rather he says, 'She gave me from the tree and I ate'. She, to be sure, *did* speak the words, 'The serpent led me astray' (Gen. 3.13).[17]

In this comment comparing Adam with Eve, we see how Augustine singles Eve out as having particular responsibility for the Fall.

Although Adam is not without sin, he was not 'led astray'.

3. *The Old Eve versus the New Eve*

A third line of argument addressed by early Christianity to the figure of Eve concerned her typological link with Mary, the mother of Jesus. This link can be traced to as early as the middle of the second century in the work of Justin Martyr. Towards the end of that century Irenaeus, Bishop of Lyons, discussed the similarities and contrasts between these two women. Having noted first how Eve shares the same status as Mary in having a husband and yet remaining a virgin, he continues:

> Eve, having become disobedient, was made the cause of death both for herself and for all the human race. Thus also Mary had a husband selected for her and nonetheless was a virgin, yet by her obedience she was made the cause of salvation both for herself and for all the human race. For this reason the law calls a woman engaged to a man his wife, while conceding that she is still a virgin. This indicates a link that goes from Mary back to Eve... Moreover, the knot of Eve's disobedience was loosened through the obedience of Mary. For what the virgin Eve bound through unbelief, this the Virgin Mary loosed through faith.[18]

Mary's faith is borne witness to by her affirmation of God's intention to make her, a virgin, conceive the Christ-child with her words:

> 'Behold, I am the handmaid of the Lord; let it be to me according to your word' (Lk. 1.38).

Although evidence identifying Mary as the New Eve is not explicit in the New Testament, the Church Fathers found texts which supported their speculation. They used, for example, the Apocalypse's contrasting imagery of the Whore of Babylon (Rev. 17) and the Queen of Heaven (Rev. 12) in order to develop their typology.

When we are considering the negative interpretations of Eve that lie at the heart of Christianity, we must also note there a certain ambivalence concerning her sin. Although it led to the Fall, and is the greatest sin ever committed, without it there would have been no act of redemption. Eve and Mary are both central characters in ensuring the inevitability of Christ's redemptive work, and Christianity recognizes a bond between these two women in the cooperation in bringing about the birth of Christ. Eve is the type of the one that is to come, Mary. This is evident in Jerome's Vulgate version of Gen. 3.15b where God castigates the serpent. The Hebrew is rendered in English as follows:

> he (*hu*) shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise his heel.

Jerome has:

> ipsa conteret caput tuum. . .
> She it is who shall bruise your head. . .

In the repercussions of Eve's act of disobedience is found the promise of redemption through the act of another woman. In her obedience will come about the act of procreation that will lead to the redemption of the world: the birth of Christ. This same theology is heard in the fifteenth-century anonymous poem:

> Ne had the apple taken been
> The apple taken been,
> Ne hadde never our Lady
> A been heaven's queen.
> Blessed be the time
> That apple taken was!
> Therefore we may singen
> 'Deo Gratias!'[19]

Soon Christianity had two types to represent all of womankind, Eve and Mary. In reality, Mary was the one and only example of her type, and all women were daughters of Eve. As Augustine defined his concept of original sin, identifying concupiscence as the primary cause with Eve as its source and instigator, so Mary became more and more elevated in her unique status. As the drastic consequences of Eve's sinful disobedience became apparent, her sinful nature was laid bare to stand in stark contrast to the perfect, untainted nature of Mary.

With the concept of congenital sin came speculation on the possible sinlessness of Christ, and by degree, the sinlessness of his mother. If Christ was to be without taint of congenital sin then his mother had to be without sin. The moment that sin is passed on from one generation to another, according to Augustine, is the moment during the act of sex that conception takes place. It can be recognized by the lust that accompanies all such acts. It is woman who awakens this lust in man, just as Eve had sparked off Adam's lust for the fruit of the tree in the midst of the Garden. Christ's conception and birth bypassed this process and was devoid of concupiscence. Mary's own immaculate conception meant that she also bypassed the inheritance of sin and therefore could not pass any stain onto the son in her womb.

Women inevitably identify with Eve, since Mary's immaculate nature, which includes giving birth to a child while remaining *virgo intacta*, take her out of their experience. Mary Daly makes the point that Mary cannot have a role within the Church that makes her the champion of womanhood since her immaculate nature was there merely to serve the higher cause of Christ:

> but when the symbolism is seen it in its full context (as expressed in Catholic doctrine) it can be seen as intending to reinforce sexual hierarchy, for the Immaculate Conception 'occurred' in anticipation of Christ's divinity. That is, Mary was said to have been 'immaculately conceived' in order to be worthy to become the Mother of Jesus, who was divine. Once again the Marian doctrine reinforces sexual caste. The inimitability of 'Mary conceived without sin' ensures that all women as woman are in the caste with Eve.[20]

4. *Resurrecting Eve?*

The estimation of women reflected in certain biblical texts along with the writings of the Church Fathers became entrenched in Christian thought. If we move on to the thirteenth century and note the work of Thomas Aquinas, the most influential theologian in Catholicism even today, we still find the influence of Aristotle lying at the heart of his thought, as it had begun to dominate Christian theology on marriage and women towards the end of the first century. Aristotle's understanding of human biology, that the male seed alone produces a new human being, and defective seed leads to the birth of a female child, formed the basis for Aquinas's estimation of women.[21] Genesis is still interpreted to reflect such beliefs about female nature. When we look at the Reformation churches a similar picture appears, in their case from placing total authority on biblical texts such as 1 Timothy 2, where, as we have seen, Eve is made uniquely responsible for the first sin, and is seen as the representative type for all women. Luther, in line with patristic tradition, gives Eve the responsibility for the Fall, and sees this as the explanation for woman's subordination to man. He does allow that, before Eve's sin, the couple were coexisting without a hierarchy between them, that is, Eve was not created without, or even with an impaired, image of God.[22] For Luther, however, we live in the reality of the Fall, and so there is an inevitable hierarchy. When describing this situation his position is not without resemblance to Aristotle's concept of natural order:

> But if a woman forsakes her office and assumes authority over her husband, she is no longer doing her own work, for which she was created, but a work that comes from her own fault and from evil. For God did not create this sex for ruling, and therefore they never rule successfully.[23]

Can feminist theology recover anything of value from the Eve tradition? Has it been so overlain by centuries of patriarchal and often misogynist interpretation that it should be put to one side? These questions lie at the heart of both Christian feminist theology and post-Christian feminism.

In the work of Phyllis Trible we find an inspired and ingenious rereading of Genesis 2 and 3 that produces a mutuality between the sexes from their creation to their act of disobedience.[24] She begins by showing that the creation of Adam in Genesis 2 is not necessarily the creation of the male sex, but rather the creation of an 'earth creature' which, she argues, is not identified sexually.[25] Sexual identity only comes when woman is created, and the 'earth creature' becomes two mutually companionable beings of male and female sex.

One of the key arguments Trible uses in her exegesis involves the meaning of the word 'helper' in the context of Eve's creation:

> Then the Lord God said, 'It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper fit for him' (Gen. 2.18).
>
> The man gave names to all the cattle, and to the birds of the air, and to every beast of the field; but for the man there was not found a helper fit for him (Gen. 2.20).

Traditionally the word 'helper' (Hebrew עזר) has been understood to signify the inherent subordination of Eve, describing as it does the creation of a second sex for the service of the first. As we noted earlier, Augustine concludes that the term can only refer to Eve's role in procreation since it is only in that sphere that she could realistically be said to 'help' Adam.

Trible prefers to translation עזר as 'companion', noting that in the Hebrew, עזר is accompanied by the phrase *kenegdo*, meaning 'corresponding to it'. Furthermore, when we look at alternative contexts in the Hebrew Bible where עזר is used it does not always signify a subordinate party: 'on the contrary, in the Hebrew scriptures this word often describes God as the superior who creates and saves Israel'.[26]

Trible's exegesis produces a reading of Genesis 2 where human relations between the sexes are in total harmony, and she refers us to the Song of Songs as further biblical poetic representation of this perfect relationship. Even when we reach the fatal ch. 3, that harmony is intact when the forbidden fruit is taken. Trible notes that the prohibition concerning the tree in the midst of the Garden is given to the 'earth creature'; woman is present in that creature as much as man. Therefore, now, as a distinct creature, the woman is able to repeat the prohibition to the serpent. In the discourse with the serpent, man and woman are present, and the woman speaks for them both and acts for them both. Their resolve and actions are as one. The disintegration of this perfect relationship comes only when the fruit has been taken, and is evidenced by the man's response to God's confrontation:

> The woman who thou gavest to be with me, she gave me the fruit of the tree, and I ate (Gen. 3.12).

With these words the man not only separates himself from the woman but also blames her and God for what has happened. Harmony has been replaced by opposition and accusation: 'The man turns against the woman whom he earlier recognized as bone of bone and flesh of flesh'.[27]

Trible, in her description of the Eden narrative as 'A Love Story Gone Awry', recognizes it as a story that reflects the imperfections of relations between the sexes. However, at the same time, her work is an act of recovery for the biblical text. In Eve's creation she discovers woman at least as equal to man, and, in the relationship between the two, a utopian unity of the sexes. By revealing this, Trible is able to point to the essential biblical blueprint for human relations as a story supporting feminist ideals. Trible's work on Genesis 2–3 creates a firm foundation for her belief in a biblical faith that exists without sexism and can be discovered in the text through depatriarchalizing exegesis.[28] Thus, despite the fact that biblical religion is patriarchal, and that Hebrew literature comes from a male-dominated society, 'the intentionality of biblical faith... is neither to create nor to perpetuate patriarchy but rather to function as salvation for both women and men'.[29]

Trible's exegesis stands as a landmark for all contemporary scholarship on Genesis 2–3 since its ingenuity and linguistic skill make it essential reading for an audience wider than that of feminist scholarship alone. She is not without her critics, however, and the criticism levelled at her work tends to centre on her belief that it is possible to discern a non-patriarchal basis lying beneath the layers of centuries of traditional interpretation and translation, despite the very nature of the patriarchal society that produced the text itself. David Clines is one such critic, and his work is of interest here in that it concerns Trible's exegesis of Genesis 2–3.

In his essay 'What Does Eve Do to Help?',[30] Clines centres his argument with Trible on her interpretation of the word עזר, which, as we noted earlier, she translates 'companion' rather than 'helper'. Clines admits to having found Trible's interpretation credible for over ten years, but confesses that his belief had more to do with his commitment to feminism than with a strictly linguistic conviction.[31] Now he is convinced otherwise:

> I conclude, from reviewing all the occurrences in the Hebrew Bible, that though superiors may help inferiors, strong may help weak, gods may help humans, in the act of helping they are being 'inferior'. That is to say, they are subjecting themselves to a secondary, subordinate position.[32]

Clines gives a variety of examples from the biblical text to support his conclusion, including human as well as divine 'help', before returning to the context of Genesis 2 to investigate the actual nature of Eve's 'help'. Like Augustine before him, Clines rejects the possibility that Eve helps Adam till the Garden, a task mentioned to Adam by God in 2.15, since the text is silent about either of them actually doing any physical labour until Adam is consigned to it as a punishment. The other task for Adam mentioned in the text is that of naming the animals, but he finishes this before woman is created. Clines concludes that the only task left for Eve to help him with is that of fulfilling the divine command given in Gen. 1.28:

> 'Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth'.

Clines sees the scene in 2.18-25 as pointing to this interpretation of Eve's role. God decides that it is not good for Adam to be alone, he requires a 'helper'. The creation of Eve does not immediately follow. Instead all the animals are paraded in front of Adam for him to name. Clines observes: 'The Lord brings the animals to Adam "to see what he would call them" not because the Lord had run out of ideas for names, but in the hope that Adam would recognize a mate'.[33] The narrative continues: 'But for the man there was not found a helper fit for him' (Gen. 2.20). Finally, when the woman is created, Adam cries: 'This is at last bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh' (Gen. 2.23). Clines sees in these words recognition by Adam of a mate suitable for him to be able to fulfil God's command to procreate. He looks to Eve's eventual punishment to support his interpretation. God says to Eve, ' "I will greatly increase your pain in childbearing" ' (Gen. 3.16), punishing her by making the one thing she has been created for as painful as possible.

Clines comments, 'so the fathers were right after all',[34] and in doing so supports the traditional interpretation of Eve that has dominated Christianity for over fifteen hundred years. His purpose is not, however, to prop up patriarchy in its decline, but rather to recognize the text in *its* essential patriarchy. Instead of spending time trying to recover the unreclaimable, feminist scholars should be working on biblical texts that do proclaim liberation and justice for all humanity. Clines makes a plea that biblical authority be removed from centre stage and instead let that space be occupied by the Bible's 'impact for good upon people' because

> despite its handicaps, despite the fact that it has misled people and promoted patriarchy, it has an unquenchable capacity—when taken in conjunction with a commitment to personal integrity—to inspire people, bring out the best in them and suggest a vision they could never have dreamed of for themselves.[35]

In his interpretation of Eve's role in the Garden, Clines is at one with radical feminists such as Mary Daly who find nothing redeemable for women in the Eden narrative:[36]

> the myth takes on cosmic proportions since the male's viewpoint is metamorphosed into God's viewpoint. It amounts to a cosmic false naming. It misnames the mystery of evil, casting it into the distorted mold of the myth of feminine evil.[37]

For Daly the story is symptomatic of Christianity's core patriarchy—a patriarchy that cannot be reformed without it losing its essential identity.

The story of Eve has become the centre-point of Christianity's encounter with feminism. For those women who reject Christianity in favour of post-Christian options, Eve is the ultimate symbol of male power and female subjugation. The first woman, being seen in terms of the originator of evil, leaves all women sharing in her curse and her guilt. For those who remain within Christianity and yet who seek to reform its estimation of women, Eve too has to be addressed. It is naive of Clines to argue that feminists would be better off putting Eve to one side and concentrating their efforts on texts that are more suited to their purpose. It is true that in engaging with Eve, feminists are in danger of using 'the master's tools', since Eve has been the possession of male commentators since the time of her creation. In a Christian context, however, Eve cannot be left alone because she is the first woman, and as such becomes the type for all women.

Perhaps applying the model of resurrection to Eve might yield better fruit. Let us put to death the Eve of patriarchal fantasy, and raise up in her stead the Eve who, created in the image of God, takes responsibility for human progress,[38] liberates herself and her husband from the playground of paradise and engages with the real world.

Notes

1. See R. Biale, *Women and Jewish Law: An Exploration of Women's Issues in Halakhic Sources* (New York: Schocken Books, 1984), pp. 121-25.

2. This story can be found in *Religion and Sexism: Images of Women in the Jewish and Christian Traditions* (ed. R.R. Ruether; New York: Simon & Schuster, 1974), pp. 341-43.

3. In *In Memory of Her* (London: SCM Press, 1983), pp. 226-33, E.S. Fiorenza convincingly explains this passage in the context of first-century Corinthian society.

4. An excellent accessible source for material by the Church Fathers on the subject of women is E.A. Clark, *Women in the Early Church* (Lewiston, NY: Edwin Mellen, 1984). The translations used in this chapter are from her collection.

5. *Discourse 2 on Genesis*, in Clark, *Early Church*, pp. 35-36.

6. This observation applies to certain other Pauline texts where there are passages that are central to the debate concerning the status of women, namely, Colossians, Ephesians, and the other Pastoral Epistles, 2 Timothy and Titus.

7. Fiorenza, *Memory*, pp. 251-84.

8. See Col. 3.18-22; Eph. 5.22-23; 1 Pet. 3.1-7.

9. On Augustine's ideas concerning sexual hierarchy, see G. Lloyd, 'Augustine and Aquinas', in A. Loades (ed.), *Feminist Theology: A Reader* (London: SPCK, 1990), pp. 90-98.

10. *Literal Commentary on Genesis* 9.5, in Clark, *Early Church*, pp. 28-29.

11. Clark, *Early Church*, p. 29.

12. Translation from Aristotle, *Politics* (LCL; trans. H. Rackham; Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1926).

13. *The Kind of Women who Ought to Be Taken as Wives* 4, in Clark, *Early Church*, pp. 36-37.

14. Clark, *Early Church*, p. 39.

15. On woman as the 'other', see M. Daly, *Beyond God the Father: Toward a Philosophy of Women's Liberation* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1974), pp. 13-68.

16. Ambrose, *On Paradise* 12.56, in Clark, *Early Church*, p. 41.

17. Augustine, *Literal Commentary on Genesis* 11.42, in Clark, *Early Church*, p. 40.

18. *Against Heresies* 3.22.4, in Clark, *Early Church*, p. 38.

19. From the work of a fifteenth-century anonymous poet; H. Gardner (ed.), *Oxford Book of English Verse 1250–1950* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1972), pp. 13-14.

20. Daly, *Beyond God*, p. 82.

21. See, e.g., *Summa Theologica* (London: Burns, Oates & Washbourne, 1922), I, Q.92, art. 1, vol. IX, pp. 275-76.

22. Luther's *Sermons on Genesis* provide a fascinating commentary on Gen. 1–3. In these comments, although he does uphold a pre-Fall perfected relationship between Adam and Eve, unhindered by Eve's later subordination, he does describe Adam as the sun and Eve as the moon to allow for a distinction, perhaps of strength, between the two. This explains the serpent's approach to Eve rather than to Adam, while not allowing for the view that Eve represented defective humanity in her essence; cf. Aquinas. See *Luther's Works*, I (ed. J. Pelikan and H.T. Lehmann; St Louis, MO: Concordia Press, 1955ff.), p. 69. On Luther and women see M. Wiesner, 'Luther and Women: The Death of Two Marys', in Loades (ed.), *Feminist Theology*, pp. 123-37.

23. *Luther's Works*, XV, p. 130.

24. *God and the Rhetoric of Sexuality* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1978), pp. 72-143.

25. Trible, *Rhetoric*, pp. 79-82.

26. Trible, *Rhetoric*, p. 90.

27. Trible, *Rhetoric*, p. 119.

28. See Trible's initial article on this methodology, 'Depatriarchalizing in Biblical Interpretation', *JAAR* 41 (1973), pp. 30-48.

29. Trible, *Rhetoric*, pp. 31.

30. In *What Does Eve Do to Help? and Other Readerly Questions to the Old Testament* (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1990), pp. 25-48.

31. Clines, *What Does Eve Do?*, p. 29.

32. Clines, *What Does Eve Do?*, pp. 30-31.

33. Clines, *What Does Eve Do?*, p. 35.

34. Clines, *What Does Eve Do?*, p. 36.

35. Clines, *What Does Eve Do?*, p. 48.

36. Daly, *Beyond God*, pp. 44-68.

37. Daly, *Beyond God*, p. 47.

38. See John Sawyer's discussion of the association of the serpent with wisdom in this volume.

TYPE AND ARCHETYPE IN THE EDEN STORY

Adrian Cunningham

Some of the general principles and problems involved in psychoanalytic treatments of the Garden of Eden story have been discussed in my contribution to a Festschrift for Louis Jacobs (Cunningham 1991). The present paper aims to compare Jungian archetypal readings and Christian typological readings of the Eden story. Two major references for these positions will be Edward F. Edinger's *Ego and Archetype* and a fifteenth-century *Biblia Pauperum.*

I shall endeavour to show that there are clear differences between the timeless pattern of the archetype and the historical pattern identified in the type. Archetypal interpretation is very like the allegorical version of Scriptures exemplified by the first-century Jewish writer, Philo, and influential in Alexandrine Christianity. *Allegoria* often features as one of the four main traditional modes of Christian exegesis (the other three being literal, moral and eschatological) but it is a *figural* allegory which is involved. Rather than representing, say, Adam as the personification of intellect (as in Philo) figural allegory is concerned with the relation between the two persons, Adam (type) and Christ (antitype) at different points in an irreversible sequence. For the sake of clarity I shall refer to this form of exegesis as typology throughout. I also hope to show how there can be Jewish as well as Christian forms of typology and how Jungian readings can be placed in the wider context of these interpretative modes.

It is strange that there seems to be no discussion of the relationship between type and archetype in either Jung or his colleagues and successors. This seems especially odd given Jung's contact with the Jesuit Hugo Rahner in the Eranos Group. For instance, Rahner's *Greek Myths and Christian Mysteries* remains one of the best works available in English for a combination of scholarly, theological and Jungian interests. Two-thirds of it were given at Eranos meetings between 1943 and 1945, and Jung draws upon this material and other of

Rahner's papers in his *Mysterium Coniunctionis*. Although Rahner uses the term 'biblical archetype', he does not explicitly discuss biblical typology; nonetheless, the complexities of the Christian theological appropriation of Old Testament and Greek materials are perfectly clear in his work. Jung does, of necessity, but without using the term, draw on typological material in his commentary on the Mass (Jung 1969). He reacted against the perceived flatness and rationalizing critical approaches of 'the Higher Criticism' in biblical studies,

> Higher Criticism and Hebrew Philology are obviously redundant, because it is only a matter of the text which the layman has under his eyes. The Christian religion has not been shaped by Higher Criticism (letter in Philp 1958: 251).

Jung and his followers ransacked Gnostic and alchemical sources to provide a different, psychologically coherent and compelling alternative tradition for the understanding and appropriation of biblical images, persons and events. In this fairly arcane search, the absence of attention to the guiding strategies of Christian interpretation over some seventeen centuries—linking motifs within the Scriptures, and these in turn to contemporary experience—is striking.

Apart from his late, startling polemic on the book of Job, Jung shows little sustained interest in whole biblical narratives, although he quotes Scripture frequently. His overall project is to trace a fragmentary but finally more promising tradition because he saw the Christian tradition as incapable on its own of resolving the problems of good and evil and of the feminine to which it had valuably given birth, raised to a higher level of differentiation. This alternative tradition runs from the mystery cults through Gnosticism and the hermeticists and thence to his own psychology. Where more orthodox Christian sources are used they are integrated into his scheme or rejected or marginalized for their lack of fit.

A psychological reading of the Bible is appropriate because for Jungians that is what the narratives really are and always were: projections of indefinitely repeated individual experiences. Thus the narratives are related to, because really about, recurrent patterns of the growth of personality and its crises. More particularly, but not always so, these patterns are referred to as archetypal in a sense that goes beyond recurrent experiences. There has been a switch of emphasis in the development of Jungian thinking. The archetypes which were originally hypothesized to account for the seeming patterns of psychological development are now often taken as primary realities (like a version of Platonic forms) to be exemplified in and stand over against the experiences they articulate.

Edinger's *Ego and Archetype, Individuation and the Religious Function of the Psyche* is one of the best Jungian studies in religion for its combination of breadth and detail in a clear and coherent argument. I shall take it as the basis for an exposition of a Jungian viewpoint, incorporating some points from other authors of this school (Jacoby, Neumann, Rollins, von Franz, Westman) on the Garden of Eden story.

The focus of the religious function of the psyche is the Self. It is somewhat misleading to say that the Self, or its realization, is the goal of individual development in analytical psychology. It would be better to say that the Self is the ultimate animating force of personality and to think of an axial relationship between Self and ego with typical variations at different stages of development. Some Jungians, and Edinger is one, envisage the Self's participation in an ultimate Self, over and above individual selves. Others, such as Michael Fordham, seem not to go so far while recognizing the extraordinary power for good or ill that this supraordinate and largely unconscious core of the personality can exercise. If a more differentiated relation to the Self is the goal of individuation, then the Self also stands at the origin of development, as it were seeking expression and direction through the growth of consciousness.

Thus, for Edinger, the Garden with the four rivers flowing from it pictures the ego's original oneness with nature and deity. There is no conflict in this paradisal identity of the two; the ego is contained in the womb of the Self. The idea of the Garden as a womb is an old one. It is attributed to Simon Magus in New Testament times, and in the early second century, in Volume II of his *Philosophumena*, Hippolytus gives a detailed elaboration. Let paradise be the womb, then Eden is the placenta and the river branching into four is the navel-string with two arteries of breath and two veins of blood. These in turn he relates to the child's four senses of sight, smell, taste and touch, and these again to the first four books of the Pentateuch!

Since psychological development means differentiation, this fused state must lead to an initial polarization, a distancing in which what belongs to the individual, what belongs to the environment (natural, familial and social), and what belongs to God and/or Self are fitfully and painfully established. The process is simultaneously one of distancing and relating, for each necessarily implies the other. The hesitancy of individual awareness within the state of semi-fusion of ego and Self involves a degree of passive inflation of the emergent ego's sense of power, what in other psychoanalytic terms might be called infantile grandiosity, or primary narcissism. The possibility of an even more dangerous, semi-conscious, active inflation can be seen in the serpent's promise, 'you shall be like gods'. In Jung's words,

> There is a deep doctrine in the legend of the Fall; it is the expression of a dim presentiment that the emancipation of ego consciousness was a Luciferian deed. Man's whole history consists from the very beginning in a conflict between his feeling of inferiority and his arrogance (1959: 420-21).

Edinger cites a legend of the Tree of Life:

> In paradise stands the tree of life and the tree of knowledge, the latter forming a hedge around the former. Only he who has cleared a path for himself through the tree of knowledge can come close to the tree of life.

He comments, 'In other words, the recovery of our lost wholeness can only be achieved by tasting and assimilating the fruits of consciousness to the full' (p. 21). The Jewish legend of Seth which exists in written form in the first century CE *Apocalypse of Moses* has Adam send his son for the oil of mercy from this tree. This is refused but promised to the holy people at the end of time. The Seth legend became incorporated in later Christian legends linking the wood of the tree of the Garden and the wood of the cross (and most significant pieces of wood in the Bible in between!)

In psychological terms, the serpent's offer of the fruit, of the knowledge not just of good and evil but of difference generally, of opposites without which there is no dynamism, is the essential transition from the inner paradise of a natural into a human world. In the Jungian view, 'nature' both wants and does not want the consciousness it intends, so human development is an *opus contra naturam* and thus always inherently ambiguous. There is a lethargy in nature which makes any move to a new stage often feel like an abandonment (both abandoning and being abandoned), a loss, even a crime, an occasion of guilt. The first pair are expelled into a world of painful growth, where wish-fulfilment and utopias fail. As in the 'parallel' story of Prometheus, these pains are the inevitable consequences of becoming conscious. 'These two stories say essentially the same thing because they are expressing the archetypal reality of the psyche and its course of development' (Edinger 1972: 24-25). Note that Edinger grounds his archetypal account by referring to an extrabiblical myth; Christian and Jewish tradition will do the grounding intrabiblically.

This representative Jungian statement can do with some unpacking. The key reference to 'the psyche' can ambiguously, often confusingly, cover, like the Hegelian *Geist* from which it in part descends, at least three possibilities:

1. an essential defining characteristic of persons;
2. a way of referring to the development of human culture;
3. a 'life-force' which is more than these, at least in the sense that it may be said to *manifest* itself in them.

We could use the related word 'archetypal' in the first two senses only. We would thus be looking for broad patterns of human development both ontogenetically and in terms of the powerful unconscious elements of culture and history within which these possible givens are shaped or filled out. This is a steep enough agenda in itself. There is a common Jungian tendency, as there is in some forms of Christianity, to make a direct link between the first and the third of these levels so that the microcosm of the isolated individual is given meaning by its participation in a macrocosmic process. Without attention to the mesocosm of the social world or the discipline of world-renouncing religious practices there are obvious dangers of inflation. There is a strong tendency in analytical psychology to consign historical, social and political issues to the rarely elaborated and pejorative area of 'collective consciousness' or to subsume them dramatically in reified 'irruptions of the collective unconscious' into history, as with witch-hunts or Nazism.

If psyche and archetype are used in the third sense, what I have simply called 'life-force' (and no matter Jung's frequent disclaimer of 'metaphysics', no one outside the Jungian circle has ever been able to see the difference), then this powerfully guarantees the sameness of meaning claimed for the Eden and Prometheus narratives. The two narratives are seen as instantiations of a timeless pattern which can show itself again spontaneously in individual experience or the practice of psychotherapy (Edinger gives a client's dream as a 'close parallel' to the ancient myth of Adam's fall, 1972: 22).

When writing generally of archetypes, Jungians may stress their atemporality or, but this is not the same thing, their timelessness. In practice, however, the sequence of their appearance may be stressed.

Thus, in classical forms of individual analysis, there was an expectation that an initial confrontation with the shadow aspect of personality would be followed by the problem of the contra-sexual archetype, the anima or anumus. Similarly, Jungian views of the emergence, development and contemporary limitations of archetypes of the Son of God or of the Virgin in Christian history, the shift from the age of Pisces to that of Aquarius, have an irreversible sequence. On the other hand, again, the appeal to 'parallels' between archetypal motifs from widely contrasting times and cultures is obviously based on an atemporality and ignoring of social and historical context. As we shall see there can be comparable tensions between recurrence of pattern and sequence of what is patterned in typology, but the emphasis is different. Overall, the Jungian treatments put the sequential nature of their data in second or marginal place, while for the greater part of typological thinking the irreversibility of the sequence, since it is primarily *narrative*, is the primary characteristic no matter how significant are the speculations on the cosmic or atemporal mysteries registered through the patterned sequence. It may be that the Jungian fascination with visual images and suspicion of the verbal (often taken as abstractly rational), and the verbal/written/textual basis of biblical imagery are deeply connected with this difference of emphasis. The absence of a Jungian theory of language is one of the school's major lacunae.

If one does not make an assumption of a timeless archetype, then the 'sameness' of meaning looked out for in myths will be more loosely construed or not used at all. One will be examining the different religious and historical contexts which give these stories their purchase as well as the patterns that may be common to them. It is the implicit or explicit assumption of psyche as 'life-force' shaping the highly selective 'empirical' material from the discordant mythologies of the world that yields the evidence, making the initial assumption look like a plausible hypothesis. Contrariwise, because of the assumption of psyche 3, a motif that the investigator finds significant tends necessarily to be taken as archetypal in senses of psyche 1 and 2, and its universal distribution rather casually taken for granted. One does not have to go as far as G.S. Kirk's demand for a 'statistical' inventory of alleged archetypal motifs (1970: 275) to agree that many of the broader Jungian claims for archetypal symbolism are as yet insufficiently broadly based.

Whilst making these general caveats, one can certainly find strong examples of traditional treatment of biblical material that would surely count as archetypal, especially in the theology of the early Christian church in Alexandria. For instance, Irenaeus (c. 130–c. 200) links the Edenic Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil with the cross of Christ 'so that he might recapitulate the universe in himself' (*Adv. Haer.* 5.18.3). Elsewhere he works into his reflections on the cosmic mystery of the cross a reference to the Pythagorean and Platonic idea of the world-soul manifesting itself in the *chi* cross formed by the intersection of the equator and the ecliptic. He writes of Christ

> whose grasp extends to the depths, even to the last foundations of the world. . . who spreads out the flat land from East to West, and stretches forth the wide spaces from North to South. . . gathering together all that is scattered, that all may know the Father (*Epideixis* 1.34).

One reading of the sign spreading out in the heavens, signalling the resurrection of the dead, in the *Didache* (that some date as early as 60 CE) bears this meaning. Or one might take the majestic imagery of Hippolytus of Rome at the beginning of the third century,

> This tree, wide as the heavens itself, has grown up into heaven from the earth. It is an immortal growth and towers between heaven and earth. It is the fulcrum of all things and the place where they are at rest. It is the foundation of the round world, the centre of the cosmos. In it all the diversities of our human nature are formed into a unity (*De Pascha Homilia* 6).

Such archetypal or cosmic understanding is only one possibility of traditional interpretation (and even in this example from Hippolytus the reference includes the *historical* centrality of Christ's crucifixion). In traditional biblical interpretation of the four senses of Scripture, whatever else they may indicate, the patterns found are between events and people taken as constituitively historical.

Let us now turn to the second focus for relating pattern and sequence regarding the Eden story. It is the first of forty pages of a fifteenth-century *Bible of the Poor*—the poor most probably referring to mendicant preachers, having some Latin but no higher education in theology. The *Biblia Pauperum* derives from earlier (not necessarily typological) illustrated abridged Bibles used in monasteries for elementary teaching purposes, and the growth of programmatic typological connecting of Old and New Testaments in church art which flourished in twelfth-century Europe in sculpture, fresco, stained glass, and manuscript illumination. This kind of representation is not a twelfth-century invention. The earliest surviving Christian art, from the late second century and early third, includes as common motifs with typological reference Adam and Eve, Noah praying in the Ark, the sacrifice of Isaac, and Moses drawing water from the rock (baptism). I have chosen this fifteenth-century example (Plate 1) for its compact richness and for its combination of visual and textual images. The Marian reference also indicates some of those developments of typology that would contribute to a dramatic pruning of its scope and eventual decline in the post-Reformation world as *the* interpretative strategy for scholarly purposes. It remains of course, though often unreflected upon, in Christian practice, for any liturgy that combines readings from the two Testaments is related to this early tradition. The gap between scholarly rejection of typology and its indispensability in the worship of many of the same scholars is a curious feature of modern Christianity. One of the appeals of Jungian readings is that they can function to bridge this gap, in effect restating core typological issues in a psychological language that offers an anchoring of the scriptural patterns in 'the development of psyche' without the inconvenience of the conflict between modern senses of history and the (from the modern point of view) odd sense of history in the Bible.

Copies of the *Biblia Pauperum* tend towards a fairly standard format, a central image from the New Testament flanked by images from the time before Moses and the time after. The central image is the antitype of the two types, but note that the latter are taken as related to one another (i.e. *within* the Old Testament) and not just separately to the antitype.

In this example we have, on the left, from the Eden story, God's cursing of the serpent—'I will make you enemies of each other: you and the woman, your offspring and her offspring' in Gen. 2.15. The hint of ultimate victory in the next two lines, in the usual rendering of the Hebrew, reads 'It will crush your head and you will strike its heel'. The Greek of the LXX has a masculine pronoun (he will crush) allowing of a specifically messianic reading taken up by Christian writers. The Latin Vulgate, in turn, has a feminine pronoun allowing of an application to Mary as second Eve.

On the right is the angel appearing to Gideon (Judg. 6.11). Gideon asks 'where are all the wonders our ancestors tell us of when they say "Did not Yahweh bring us out of Egypt?" But now Yahweh has deserted us; he has abandoned us to Midian.' The second of the

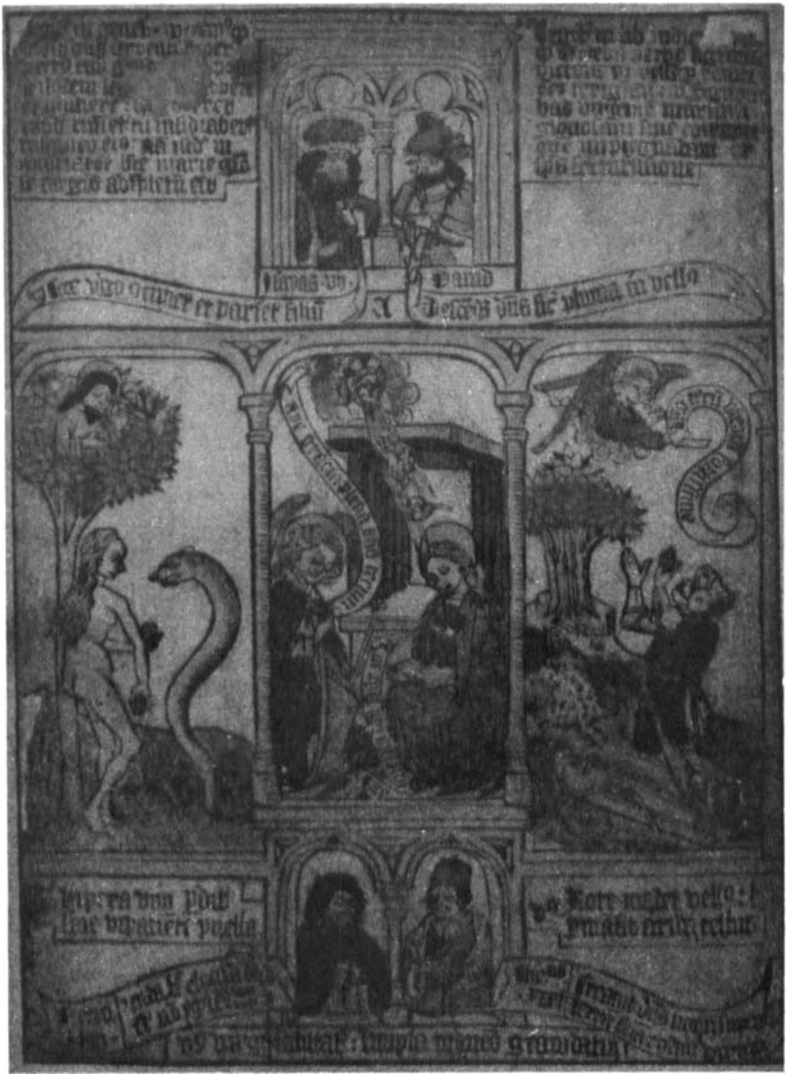

Plate 1. Page 1 from *Biblia Pauperum*, 1465, Bodleian Library, Douce.248.

affirmative signs given in response (6.36-37) is the bedewing of a fleece when the surrounding ground remains dry. The exchange between Gideon and the angel is picked up in the phrasing of Luke's account of the angel's annunciation to Mary (Lk 1.28-30) shown in the central picture. The bedewed fleece became a common image for understanding Mary's virginal conception by the action of of the Spirit. In a similar way the overshadowing by the Spirit at the beginning of a new creation could be linked back to the hovering of God's spirit over the waters in the first verse of Genesis, and forward to the descent of the Spirit in the form of tongues of fire upon Mary and the apostles at Pentecost.

Above the triptych is the 'witness of the prophets', Isaiah and David. The words on the scrolls are taken from Isa. 7.14,

> The Lord himself, therefore, will give you a sign. It is thus: the maiden is with child and will soon give birth to a son whom she will call Immanuel

and Ps. 71.6,

> I have relied on you since I was born,
> you have been my portion from my mother's womb,
> and the constant theme of my praise.

In the corresponding position at the bottom of the page are two further scrolls. To the left, from Ezekiel, referring to the outer east gate of the sanctuary of the temple,

> Yahweh said to me, 'This gate shall be kept shut. No one will open it or go through it since Yahweh the God of Israel has been through it. And so it must be kept shut' (44.2).

The image of the opening of the gate with the birth of the messiah is also of obvious Marian application. The scroll to the right refers to the prophet Jeremiah,

> Come home, virgin of Israel,
> come home to these towns of yours.
> How long will you hesitate, disloyal daughter?
> For Yahweh is creating something new on earth:
> the Woman sets out to find her Husband again (32.22).

The Greek Bible has for this last line, 'men will walk in salvation'. The Hebrew text has here, 'female shall encompass a man' and in the Vulgate, Jerome interpreted this in the context of a new creation as prophetic of the virginal conception of Christ. The phrase could also mean the woman turns round, even dances round, the man—in which case (as in the Jerusalem Bible version above) the reference is to the personification of Israel as a woman divorced by Yahweh for her faithlessness now returning to him. Either or both of these readings are typologically compatible, and it is this flexibility which can be taken as either the asset or the downfall of such an approach. The Jeremiah reference can, and in the *Biblia* it would seem most obvious, be understood in connection with the birth of the messiah. It could also be taken up in connection with the Church seen as a new Israel, with the figure of the Virgin overlapping that of Ecclesia (as on other occasions either of these can overlap with the figure of Wisdom).

There are thus seven items in this mandalic form. The triptych of types and antitype and the four witnesses of the prophets give a version of diverse scriptural texts and images which is both simple and complex. Whether one finds this particular instance imaginatively compelling or fanciful is not the issue here; it is the intelligibility rather than the comprehensibility of typology that concerns us.

In connection with this typological treatment of the Eve/serpent motif in the *Biblia Pauperum* some of the questions about the relation between pattern and sequence raised earlier can be sharpened. First, the Eve–Gideon–Mary sequence is, as with all strictly typological reference, irreversible. The connections make no sense if they are not in that particular order. The pattern registered in our example is that *of* this sequence rather than the sequence being that of the instantiations of something like an archetype that could possibly occur in a different order, or no order at all. Secondly, this doubt about the priority of the archetype as an appropriate way of responding to the example is confirmed if one tries to think of what archetype could be represented by these three images. In other *Biblia Pauperum* illustrations, the priority of the archetypal reading could look more plausible. For instance, on page 27 of the Bodleian copy, the triptych is of Joseph put in the well by his brothers, Jonah cast to the whale, and Jesus in the tomb as the antitype. These could be taken as three versions of the archetypal descent of the hero into an underworld, or as evidence for such an archetypal pattern. This Joseph triptych in *Biblia Pauperum* is labelled 'The Night Sea Journey' of the hero in Jung's *Psychology and Alchemy* (1968: 333; cf. 340).

It is hard to see how such an archetypal reading is possible in the present case. The Eve–Gideon–Mary relations are not those of exemplifying an archetype—as Eve–Mary alone might be. The connections shown are only possible because looking *back* along the sequence, this form of typological method seeks not only history-like person-to-person correspondences and event-to-event correspondences, but prior exemplifications of later beliefs about and qualities of (in this case) Mary which are history-like in so far as they are taken as real in both instances, although of a different kind. Without Mary at the end of the sequence, a link between Eve and Gideon's fleece is inconceivable. The way in which a pattern is brought out of the biblical sources and believed to be inherent in them is, at this point, incompatible with the view that the sequence is either not important or that the pattern is basically one of an archetypal development.

The understanding of the Bible in this typological way is only one of the four interpretative perspectives traditionally available. Aquinas, for example, in *Summa Theologiae* 1.10, follows Gregory's view that Scripture transcends all other sciences in using the same discourse to tell history and reveal mystery, for in this science alone what is meant by the words has further meaning. The first historical or literal meaning (and since the ultimate author is God whose mind grasps everything simultaneously there may be more than one historical meaning) has a spiritual meaning based upon it. Aquinas is careful to set a scale for spiritual meanings—anything necessary to faith in such a meaning is conveyed clearly and literally in some other place in Scripture. This would mean, I take it, that the type of Gideon's fleece, while spiritually fruitful, would not be necessary to faith, but the type of Eve would. The spiritual meaning can be multiple: the Old Testament prefigures the New; the life of Christ and what prefigured it symbolize how we should behave; the biblical patterns point to the nature of the world to come.

The fourfold scheme goes back to Clement of Alexandria (c. 150–c. 215) and the division which became classical for the Middle Ages was established by Cassian in the fifth century. Beyond the literal meaning is the moral: the text 'praise the Lord, O Jerusalem' evokes praise in us. In the typological sense Jerusalem means the Church. In the fourth sense, the meaning for eternity, Jerusalem is the heavenly City of God. By a process of continued meditation on the Scriptures the soul is formed after the likeness of God. It is important to keep in mind that the fourfold study of Scripture was not only a matter of intellectual inquiry or exposition but one of spiritual or psychological formation. For Cassian,

> The mind does not penetrate these mysteries by learning or analysis. The perception of the inward mysteries is not acquired. It is a gift, an illumination from on high. The purpose of the moral apprehension is not to acquire, but to place the soul in a condition where it can receive (Chadwick 1968: 102).

I have deliberately used 'typological' for the Jerusalem–Church link which Cassian describes as 'allegorical'. These two words, and 'figural', are sometimes used interchangeably, but if one takes allegory to mean the deliberately stated presentation of moral, philosophical or spiritual principles and qualities in narrative or pictorial form (or the reading of traditional narratives as if they had been constructed along these lines) then it is wholly different from typology. This kind of allegorical biblical interpretation was, according to Philo, practised by Palestinian Jews around the beginning of the Common Era and it became very influential in Alexandrine Christianity. In an Eranos lecture of 1934 discussing collective unconscious contents 'dealing with primordial types, universal images that have existed since the remotest times', Jung observes that 'The term "archetype" occurs as early as Philo-Judaeus, with reference to the *Imago Dei* (God-image) in man' (1959: 4). The reference is indeed apposite, for Jung's view of Scripture, and religion generally, has much in common with Philo's allegorizing and it may be that his reading of Philo led him to miss the distinctive characteristics of typology. In his interpretation of Genesis, Philo seems to use the word 'archetype' in a rather wider sense, referring to the planting of the Garden as an earthly copy of heavenly wisdom, 'as of an archetype'. He separates the story of Eve and the serpent from the mythical fictions of the Greeks, for the 'types' are to be understood allegorically. Thus the serpent is a suitable symbol of pleasure, the means of uniting in the intelligible world, prior to the sensible world, intellect (Adam) and sensation (Eve). This reading of the text is quite different from a typological one.

In the third century, Origen had distinguished a literal, moral and spiritual sense of Scripture and tried to relate them to the human body, soul and spirit respectively. One might in a speculative way consider a comparable connection of fourfold exegesis with the four psychological functions of Jung's theory of personality: the historical/literal (Sensation); the moral (Feeling); the typological (Thinking); the eschatological (Intuition).

The fourfold method is summed up in the early thirteenth-century formula attributed to Nicholas of Lyra (the probable author being Augustine of Dacia),

> Littera gesta docet, quid credas allegoria,
> Moralis quid agas, quo tendas anagogia.

Other writers will, as we have seen, use different terms with their own implications but the basic scheme for the four senses of Scripture (narrative, typological, moral and eschatological) is broadly consistent. There is:

1. a literal narrative meaning of the texts
2. whose inter-connections from Adam to Christ provide what is to be believed and
3. applications to the moral and spiritual life drawn from these two
4. prepare us for the end of time, the final realization of what started in Adam.

It is worth stressing again that senses 1, 2, and 4 refer to connections between events. Christ rectifies what went wrong in Adam, but the whole story is not complete until the events of the end time and the full realization of the new creation. The promises of the Scriptures are not yet wholly fulfilled and paradise is not yet regained. This remaining openness of the story was, and is, often lost in the Christian need to harmonize the two Testaments and thus validate the New, a need nicely caught in Ignatius of Antioch's eighth Letter to the Philadelphians,

> Some Christians were so attached to the Old Testament they could say— 'Unless I find a thing in our ancient records, I refuse to believe it in the Gospels' and when I assured them that it was, indeed, in the ancient scriptures, they retorted, 'That has got to be proved'.

While the life of Christ recapitulates key motifs of the Old Testament, giving them for the Christian a definitive shape, the fullness of the age expected in messianic Judaism remains. The corner, as it were, has been turned but as the story up to each point of its writing has had to be seen in a new light, the present meaning both revealing and determining the meaning up to that point, so the final meaning of the whole is still to be determined. Apocalyptic and millennialist writing often evidences the attempt to read the signs forward.

Typological thinking, then, involves a complex shift of emphasis between some common ideas of event and meaning, and of cause and effect.

> Whereas in the modern view the event is always self-sufficient and secure, whilst the interpretation is fundamentally incomplete, in the figural interpretation the fact is subordinated to an interpretation which is fully secured to begin with: the event is enacted according to an ideal model which is a prototype situation in the future and thus far only promised (Auerbach 1959: 58-59).

This future reference in tension with the obvious meaning of prototype is crucial. For causal thinking 'causes are the antitypes of their effects' (Frye 1982: 81), the explanation of the effect is sought in the cause, in the past. Typological understanding is rather different. One needs to separate typology from the powerful and naive view of the ultimate author of the Bible as a divine detective-story writer. Scattering clues through his text, he issues a challenge to the reader, in the manner of Ellery Queen, somewhere half-way through the New Testament—with the polemical edge that the sharp-witted convert to Christianity, and the less sharp remain Jewish believers. There are sound reasons for typology not being a word used by Jewish commentators. Frank Talmage, however, has noted that 'typological exegesis was not unknown to [mediaeval] Judaism and was used far more extensively than is generally supposed' (Talmage 1989: 314). He instances Isaac Abravanel in the fifteenth century taking Adam to be a type of Israel, the true man into whom God breathed his spirit, the Torah. His contemporary Isaac ben Joseph Ha-Kohen wrote a commentary on the book of Ruth as a prefiguration of the history of Israel.

The disturbance to causal thinking and to archetypal thinking that the biblical narratives provoke has further implications. It might seem obvious that the creation and Eden stories should, as Eliade for instance claims of all origin stories, be at the core of the mythology, but they are not. The references to the first chapters of Genesis in the rest of the Old Testament are extraordinarily sparse for such a uniquely cross-referencing set of texts. Equally sparse is evidence for any significant ritual use of these stories where, if the earliest times, *in illo tempore*, are decisive, one would expect to find them at the centre. It is, of course, the Pauline linking of a first and second Adam that retrospectively assigns crucial significance to the Garden story. I will let this 'assigning of significance' stand as a monitory slip just after citing Auerbach's brilliant formulation, illustrating the difficulty of trying to adjust to the typological mode. It is not a question of putting a meaning onto an event; rather two events illuminate one another and point to the real and definitive event promised in the future.

The shifting of the prototype to the end of the sequence marks another major difference between type and archetype. With the archetype, whether Jungian or Eliadean, one is often still, oddly and rather against their wishes, in a world of causal thinking. Of course a difference over causality was a key element in Jung's break with Freud, and the focus of classical Jungian therapy is the significance of the present and the pressure upon it of the psyche's future development. Nonetheless, the teleology which is opposed to Freud's archaeology seems to me to have at least something of a backward reference when it is linked to a theory of archetypes. The archetypal reality is indefinitely old, if not timeless; the human subject 're-enacts' archetypal realities, they are already there to be manifest in our individual reactions to them. Of course, something like this can be part of our experience of life, particularly at critical points, and re-enactment lies at the core of Jewish and Christian ritual—'Why is this night unlike any other night?'; 'Do this in memory of me'. But the memory is 'until he comes again'. The re-enactive archetypal aspect is certainly there but, along with a typological strategy that carries a different bias, has the complicating shifts of perspective and dimension that I have tried to indicate.

One speaks of fourfold interpretation but as my slip over the assigning of meanings showed, its practitioners were not attempting to operate with a modern sense of interpretation any more than the spatial relations of Byzantine art, where depth is conceived of as being in front of what is represented, not behind it, are an attempt at Renaissance perspective, a window opening onto a space beyond. One might use 'interpretation' of the moral sense of Scripture, the application of the meaning of a narrative motif to the present situation of the believer, and it might be under this head that the therapeutic use of biblical narrative in analytical psychology would be valuably located. The speculative, constructive aspect of the fourth sense, the eschatological, could also perhaps be thought of as interpretative. With the literal and typological senses, however, this term can mislead and the older word 'exegesis' be more useful, for the connections within the texts are not the constructive act of the exegete but an integral part of the object of study, at times one feels its *sine qua non*. With the exception of 1 and 2 Maccabbees (which, partly for this reason perhaps, are not in the Jewish canon) there are very few pages of the entire Bible that do not refer to other parts of the texts.

These connections are not, of course, all of a typological nature and Jewish exegetes do not use a term with such a specifically Christocentric reference and Pauline sense of a move from Old Testament shadows to New Testament realities in which the Christian writings supersede the Jewish ones. But the typological strategy in the construction of the New Testament builds directly upon the pervasive cross-referencing already noted in the Old Testament, which includes legal references, literary embellishments, simple historical references, puns, but also precisely the kinds of meaningful connections between diverse historical events and persons which are found in typological exegesis. As Joel Rosenberg says, 'Biblical tradition is in a sense pre-interpreted' (Rosenberg 1989: 90). He provides telling phrases to amplify this sense: 'internal exegesis', 'symmetry', 'anticipatory use of information', and 'traditionary montage'. This last phrase might be aptly applied to the schema of the *Biblia Pauperum*. As an outsider to the field of biblical studies I regret not having been able, in the period of writing this paper, to trace a Hebrew term for this compositional process. I thus rather awkwardly use the terms Jewish typology to describe a basic fact about the composition of the Hebrew Bible, New Testament typology for the compositional strategy of the New Testament, and Christian typology to cover post- or extra-New Testament exegesis.

In Jewish typology, the really significant creation story concerns the origin of a people from Abraham onwards. It is from this historical point that typology as a relation between historical or history-like events and people starts in the Abrahamic, Jacob and Joseph cycles of stories through to the detailed modelling of the initiation of the great vision of Daniel upon that of Ezekiel, his predecessor of some four and a half centuries. The earlier chapters of Genesis are affixed to set the history of the nation and its dealings with Yahweh in a context of the whole of humanity and the cosmos. Jewish handling of cosmogony and of the Eden narrative thus has a greater degree of flexibility in terms of speculative and allegorical treatment than Christian, which needs theologically to root its new creation in the original one. The very early chapters of Genesis, the pre-'historic', will in the nature of the case feature only marginally in Jewish typology. Several of the most interesting and significant topics for Christian typology regarding these chapters are in Wisdom and Ecclesiasticus, contained in the LXX for Jews of the Diaspora but not in the Hebrew canon fixed around the beginning of the Common Era. Concerns with an exalted Adam as first father of Israel, as the origin of sin and death, and as portent of the humanity of the final age are found in the Jewish apocrypha and pseudepigrapha probably contemporary with or later than Paul, and more extensively in Palestinian writers up to the third century.

Typology is as indispensable to Jewish liturgy in its own way as it is to Christian. Long before the destruction of the Second Temple there was a custom on Sabbaths, fasts and festivals of concluding the reading from the law (the Sedrah) with a lesson from the prophets (the Haftorah) which in some way parallels it. Thus the Haftorah following Gen. 6.7, where God repents of his human creation but spares Noah, concerns the creator God calling Israel to be a light to the nations (Isa. 42.5–43.10). Similarly, to take just one more instance, there is an alignment of Abraham's old age (Gen. 25.1) and David's (1 Kgs 1.1-31) and the contrasting characters of their sons, Isaac and Adonijah.

This concludes my brief exploration of typological approaches to the Bible and the different accents that can be put upon pattern and sequence in the use of type and archetype in looking at the Garden of Eden story. Given the centrality of typology in both the construction and exegesis of the Bible, it should be clear by now that the Jungian reading does not replace or subvert older ones, unless one simply accepts that the psychological is the only real interpretation.

In the long run it may be useful to consider Jungian psychology in relation to the Bible as a form of 'reflective mythology'. This term has been used in biblical studies to elucidate, for example, the incorporation of material from the Isis myth in the Wisdom of Solomon, combatting the Hellenized revival of her cult.

> 'Reflective mythology' is not a living myth but is rather a form of theology appropriating mythical language, material, and patterns from different myths, and it uses these patterns, motifs, and configurations for its own theological concerns. Such a theology is not interested in reproducing the myth itself or the mythic materials as they stand, but rather in taking up and adapting the various mythical elements to its own theological goal and theoretical concerns (Fiorenza 1975: 29).

In forming a reflective mythology of its own from (among other things) biblical material, analytical psychology can also contribute to the understanding of the Bible. The Jungian account of the Garden of

Eden can be seen as an extension and amplification of Jewish and Christian allegorical approaches to Scripture. It can also, in therapeutic practice and dream analysis, be seen as a valuable contemporary application of what would earlier have been called the moral sense of Scripture.

In reaction to the 'Higher Criticism' which Jung despised, he and his school have, in effect, put allegorical interpretations of the Bible back in the public world. In a further paper I hope to investigate the wider question of whether the typological imagination, the overriding importance of which for Western thinking Frye has argued so well, is not of decisive significance for the genesis of analytical psychology as a whole.

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IN SEARCH OF HER FATHER: A LACANIAN APPROACH TO GENESIS 2–3

Anna Piskorowski

Although on the surface, Genesis 3 is a story about disobedience, at a deeper level it is a story about the complexity of relationships and the indoctrination of the primal couple into the prescribed society of the future. The usage of a Lacanian approach highlights these dimensions. In Lacanian theory each individual or subject must recognize their part in the existent family and social network. Each individual's part is already predetermined, laid down by the practises of society (Eagleton 1983: 165). Therefore in the Genesis text, the first man and woman are subjects who accept their pre-given social and sexual roles by negotiating their own passage through the Oedipus complex.

This paper focuses on the Oedipal and Electra complexes of the first couple in the Garden of Eden. The male and female roles of God as parent are discussed in order to develop a clear picture of the Oedipal complex processes that both sexes must go through.

Since Lacanian thought has been based on Freud's concepts of the Oedipus complex, repression and the unconscious, the essence of Freud's basic principles will be sketched.

In Freud's theory the pre-Oedipal stage is characterized by what Freud terms the 'pleasure principle'. The child at this stage is sadistic, aggressive and self-involved (Lacan 1977: ch. 2; Eagleton 1983: 154). The child does not have any concept of sexual differences but does have sexual drives. These drives are incestuous for it has a desire for sexual union with the mother's body.

The Oedipal/Electra complex describes how each male and female relinquishes the 'pleasure principle' for the 'reality principle'; how each sex harnesses its sexual drives and instincts, and arrives at socially and culturally valued ends, by repressing certain desires into the unconscious. This process is termed the Oedipus complex for the male and the Electra complex for the female.

In the Oedipus theory, the boy, in a phallic stage, becomes his mother's lover; this relationship which he seeks to assume belongs to his father. The father becomes a rival. The only way the boy abandons this desire for his mother is to repress it—through the fear of castration. In recalling the appearance of the female genitals the boy takes the father's threat of castration seriously. The end of the Oedipus complex arises out of the boy's identification with the father, and with the understanding that the father symbolizes a role that the boy may realize in the future.

The Electra complex develops differently. The castration complex for the girl consists in feelings of not having a penis or penis envy. At the phallic stage, the girl is disillusioned; she turns against her first love, her mother, because she holds her mother responsible for her lack of a penis. She turns to her father in the hopes of having command of a penis, but later to have his child. The girl's repression of her desire for the father is not as strongly restrained. She cannot be threatened by the fear of castration for she is already a castrated individual; however she can be threatened by the fear of the loss of love. In the end the girl identifies with the mother because her seduction of the father is doomed to failure. It is in the post-Oedipus stage that the child assumes a position within society and culture.

Lacan

A new system of thought in the use of Freudianism is proposed by Lacan. He reformulates Freud's concepts by incorporating language into his theory. He places greater emphasis on the linguistic development of the child. He operates on the premise that Freud's theory should be taken not literally, but symbolically, within the register of language.

Lacan's adaptation of Saussure's linguistic terminology whereby the sign, expressed as in a mathematical equation, represents or equals the signifier (usually a word-sound) above the line of the signified (concept) is one instance where Lacan verges away from Freudianism (Seldon 1985: 52).

In Saussure's conceptualization of the signifier and the signified, the two are bonded and it is this bond that provides us with meaning. Lacan subverts this idea by showing how two different signifiers can have the same signified or vice versa. In other words a whole chain of signifiers may have multiple meanings. This takes on an interesting dimension when Lacan states that the unconscious is the 'result of the structuring of desire by language' (Robey 1982: 154). The unconscious becomes a continual movement of signifiers whose signifieds are often inaccessible because they are repressed (Eagleton 1983: 168).

In the process of identification (to identify with), the subject desires the 'Other'. The other is the differential structure of language and of social relations that constitutes the subject in the first place and in which the subject must take up its place (Lacan 1977: 264-86; Moi 1985: 101); or the subject desires what the subject lacks. The unconscious or repressed desire is a process set in motion by differences (Eagleton 1983: 173). The father is the first encounter the child has with the other. Previously it had lived in the realm of what Lacan calls the Imaginary, in which subjects and objects blur and the child does not differentiate itself from the others (especially the mother). Identity is made or comes about as the result of difference, which is encountered as sexual difference. Parallel to the developing distinction between the subject and the other is the child's developing acquisition of language in which it experiences the same distinction. Language enters the child's world at this time. And as we know in semiotic theory, words are signs which have meaning only by their differences from other signs. Signs presuppose the absences of objects they signify. 'Our language stands in for objects' (Eagleton 1983: 166). Thus the child discovers that its identity as a subject is 'constituted by its relations of differences and similarity to the objects around it' (Eagleton 1983: 167).

The Oedipal crisis represents the entry into the Symbolic Order. The primary repression in the Oedipal complex is the prohibition of the body of the mother. According to Lacan, this repressed desire becomes the unconscious which is thereupon banished to the world of language. Instead of being able to possess anything, the child moves from signifiers to signifiers, along a chain of signifiers. The subject which has gone through the Oedipal crisis successfully is severed from the mother's body, but the desire will always remain and the subject will continue to hunt it out. In this Symbolic Order which has replaced the realm of the Imaginary, the subject is continually being restructured. It makes do with substitutions, with metaphors, but is never able to recover the identity it had in the Imaginary: the imaginary identity it had with the mother and with the world.

Specific details that Lacan incorporates into his views of the

Imaginary and the Symbolic Order need to be illustrated. The realm of the Imaginary consists of the beginning of the development of the subject. This is a narcissistic process by which the centre of self is constructed (Lacan 1977: 1-7; Eagleton 1983: 164). At the beginning, the centre of self lacks definition. Then, in what Lacan terms the mirror stage, where the child finds the self being reflected by a mirror, the sense of 'I' is found by what is reflected back to the subject by some object or by another person in the world. The reflection that the child sees in the mirror provides the child with a meaning of itself. Yet this is only an image in which some sort of identification occurs, an alienated one, where the child misrecognizes itself. The crisis of the Oedipus/Electra involves the realm of the Imaginary (Turkle 1978: 54). It is in this stage that the child models itself after the mother; the mother is an illusion or thought just as the reflection of the self is in the mirror. It is at this stage that the child imagines what Lacan calls the 'Desire of the Mother' (Wright 1984: 108). This term refers both to the desire for the mother and the mother's desire. The child imagines that it satisfies all of the mother's desires, in psychoanalytical terms becoming the 'phallus' for the mother, and, as well, the child desires the mother to satisfy its own needs. At this particular stage there is no repression and the unconscious does not exist. This experience is valid for both the son and the daughter.

The child enters the Symbolic Order when the individual internalizes the function of society through language. It is characterized by the child's separation from the mother and identification with the father as well as the emergence of the unconscious.

Understanding the Symbolic Order is essential for comprehending how the Oedipus/Electra crisis works (Moi 1985: 99). In the Imaginary (a pre-verbal stage) the mother and child were one. In the Symbolic Order, the father enters the scene and splits up the unity of the mother and child. For the boy, the 'law of the father' (threat of castration) signifies to the boy a loss of the mother and thus his desire of the mother is repressed. However, for the girl, the 'law of the father' (penis envy) signifies the girl's loss of the father and this desire of the father is not so strongly repressed (Kline 1972: 96).

In this stage the absence of satisfaction has to be accepted. The desire for the mother is replaced by the 'name of the father' or the 'law of the father' or his 'saying no' to the child's sexual attachment for the mother (Turkle 1978: 55).

The concept of the 'Other' is that which introduces lack in operations of the subject (Lacan 1977: 263; Sturrock 1979: 134). For Lacan this 'Other' is the father within the Oedipal triangle who forbids incest, threatens castration and prohibits the desire the child has for its mother. The 'Other' or the symbolic father becomes the figure of the law. The 'name of the father', the original 'Other', introduces a gap between desire and its object(s) which the subjects are bounded by, and bound to throughout their lives and at all levels of their experience (Lacan 1977: 67; Sturrock 1979: 134, 136).

Genesis Text

As stated beforehand it will be the endeavour of this paper to apply Lacanian principles to the Genesis 3 text, to explain the Oedipus/Electra crisis by identifying the elements of the Imaginary and the Symbolic Order.

The most evident problem in using these Lacanian principles on the Genesis text is one of God's sexuality. In order to understand how the Oedipus/Electra complexes work in this discussion I will therefore consider God to represent both the mother role and the father role in the Genesis text. Genesis portrays God in a nurturing, caring, motherly role, when he creates the man and the woman, and makes adequate provisions for their bodily needs. As well, the fatherly aspects of God are not lost to the reader; his prohibitions are given, and his authoritative voice is heard.

Since God is the combination of the two roles (creator and the giver of the law), he can be considered as something to be desired by both the first man and woman, and also be the object of repression by both characters. It is my intention to work through the story on this premise. Therefore I will endow God with the names of (1) God the Mother (creator) and (2) God the Father (prohibitor).

God the Mother creates her son from the ground and her daughter from the rib of her son. The mother nurtures them, provides them with food and an environment. Initially they are both in the Imaginary phase but by Gen. 3.5 both primary characters are using speech in their encounters with others. In associating the prohibition of the tree with God's fatherly image to the role of the father (given of the incest law) the plot begins. God the Father enters the scene and imposes upon both his offspring his power of authority. He tells them where they may eat, and what. They passively accept these demands, these signs of authority. Following the laying down of the law, God the

Father exits the scene, allowing his offspring time to themselves.

The above is a simplistic overview of what occurs in the Genesis account. Parental relationships in the text are far more complex, as the later analysis of the Oedipus complex proves.

The crisis arrives in Gen. 3.5. Up to this point the couple identified with the mother image of God, the 'name of the father' and the 'law of the father', in Lacanian terms, were introduced without their total comprehension of it. Any correlation between the tree and the implied sexual taboos was not yet evident. It is only at this point (Gen. 3.5) that the woman understands what the 'law of the father' or his saying 'no' in the prohibition represents or signifies. Meaning only emerges through discourse. In 3.5, the serpent, symbolic of language, is present at the first discourse with the woman. A certain displacement in the signification process, that of the signifier being replaced by another signifier, occurs in this discourse. The 'no' representing the prohibition not to eat from a specific tree is substituted for 'becoming like God, knowing good and evil'. In the Electra complex, the girl transfers her love of mother to father, but the law that is represented by the tree is telling her she may not have access to her father's penis or have his child. Therefore the tree is no longer a symbol for the 'No' but represents the repressed desire held in the woman's unconscious.

During the seduction fantasy the girl turns toward the father figure and therefore her desire is for her father rather than for her mother, as is the case of the boy. The law (against incest) of the father is clearly forbidding her closer access to her father but the serpent in Gen. 3.5 provides the woman with startling information, for he states 'For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened and you will be like God, knowing good and evil'. The woman has this desire to have knowledge of her father. The prohibition given by God the Father is one against acquiring knowledge about him. It is at this stage that the woman represses her desire of the father into the unconscious.

In Gen. 3.6 the tree represents delight, goodness and wisdom. The fruit of the tree becomes one signifier in exchange for another signifier, that is, the desire for the father. Nevertheless, because the subject is always pushed into achieving what is impossible to achieve, the woman's desire, now changed in the signification process, becomes a desire for the fruit itself. She eats of the fruit but discovers she is still in the state of desiring that which she cannot have, namely, the father.

For the son, the crisis would involve accepting the father's law, that is, repressing his sexual attachment to his mother, repressing this desire into the unconscious and identifying with the father. In Genesis the man's parental relations are somewhat problematic. First, the man is not acquainted with God the Mother as he is with God the Father. In the story the man only knows God as the giver of the Law, therefore only in the fatherly role. However, in this instance, if we equate the mother role with that of the ground, from which the man was taken, then the Oedipus crisis comes to completion.

In the Garden the man is at one with the ground, for he is to till it and to keep it. This corresponds to Lacan's Imaginary phase where the son and the mother are one. The man understands the meaning of the prohibition when it is given to him, since upon his death he would be separated from his mother earth if he disobeyed the father. Even the Oedipal resolution, given this particular understanding, unfolds appropriately. The man, after eating the forbidden fruit, accepts God the Father's pronouncements; his interaction with the mother earth is completely changed. They are no longer one, as in the Imaginary. He may no longer have that access to her that he had before, he may not desire her sexually. The mother earth will be totally unproductive for him. The relationship they once had no longer exists. Only in the son's death may he return to the mother earth from which he came. The son identifies with his father knowing that in the end he will have his mother once more. He identifies with God the Father, giver of the law, for he will be like his father, a giver of the law to his wife, as God the Father is a giver of the law for the mother earth and his offspring.

The self or subject is always finding itself through reflections of itself in the 'Other'. The rules and regulations of society and the participation of the three characters son/daughter/father are clearly dictated by the father. For the son, the authority of the father remains supreme (through castration-fear). For the daughter, another form of signification occurs. Her reaction is based upon the fear of loss of love.

The resolution to the Oedipal/Electra complex must come about 'through the acceptance of passivity in regard to the father's authority' (Con Davis 1981: 8). Genesis 3 is a narrative of such a resolution, in that the couple accept their position in a world already pre-structured for them. God's statements in 3.16-19 enlighten them about their specified roles, and their knowledge of their appropriate roles is complete. The gauge by which to measure the resolution involves the couple's nakedness. Prior to 3.5 the couple were naked and not ashamed; in other words they were aware of their sexual differences but not of the regulations that accompany such awareness.

In eating of the fruit of the Tree of Knowledge, the couple became naked, and they realized that they were without covering. They became aware of their differences and similarities with God. They became aware of a lack that they had. Her desire of the father and his of the mother, this particular 'Other', was prohibited. This is particularly evident in the daughter's search for her father. Her desire for her father is repressed into the unconscious. The signifier of the desire makes an association with another signifier, the tree, which in turn represents the signified, the father. In her search she discovers that this search will be doomed. Gen. 3.16-20 exposes the stipulations placed upon the couple. The man is to suffer in toiling with the earth, and be subjected to the earth's nature. The woman is to suffer in childbirth and be dominated by her desire for her husband. There is no outcry from either character; they passively accept their designated roles.

In this paper, I have been working at applying Lacanian terminology in an narrative and psychoanalytical manner. Special modifications had to be made in order to establish a working framework for the Genesis text.

In Lacan generally, the subject is always redefining itself in terms of the 'Other'. The pre-given structure in the Genesis account divided the roles into two basic categories, that of God, and that of the humans. In the end, the humans, true to their roles as sons and daughters, made their transitions from the Imaginary realm into the Symbolic Order. Each character repressed their desires into the unconscious: the man repressed his desire for mother earth, the woman repressed her desire for the father. However, in perfect harmony with Lacanian thinking, it is only when language enters the woman's life that she must come to terms with her sexual urges. It is the woman's search for the father that brings both characters to the crisis point. As Lacan points out, 'There can be no final satisfaction of our desire since there is no final signifier or object that can be what has been lost forever' (Moi 1985: 101). The woman's desire was doomed at its inception; it is only upon realizing this that the daughter identifies with the motherly creative aspect of God. The son identifies with his father, delaying the satisfaction of the position he will one day fill. The Electra and Oedipus crises have been resolved with the entry of the first couple into the Symbolic Order. All life is dominated by the Symbolic Order: the subject may or may not like this order of things but it has no choice (Moi 1985: 100). Genesis 2–3 has proved to be a story about the transformation of the subject. No longer are the first couple one with the Imaginary where their identity was whole and unblemished, lacking nothing. Rather, they have entered the Symbolic Order where the first couple's identity is based on differences and lack. They have become indoctrinated and have accepted their societal and family relationships.

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